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MRS. ATHELING AND PHILEMON. (Page 18.)

Frontispiece.

WHAT I TOLD DORCAS

A Story for Mission Workers

BY

MARY E. IRELAND

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Copyright, 1895,
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TO

Mrs. F. S. Detweiler

OF OMAHA, NEBRASKA

A BELOVED AND EFFICIENT PRESIDENT OF
THE WOMAN'S HOME AND FOREIGN MISSIONARY SOCIETY OF THE
GENERAL SYNOD OF THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
AND TO THE OFFICERS AND MEMBERS OF MISSIONARY SOCIETIES OF
EVERY DENOMINATION, THIS STORY OF A SOCIETY IN A RURAL
NEIGHBORHOOD IS AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED BY

THE AUTHOR

PREFACE.

THE form adopted in writing "What I Told Dorcas" was suggested by seeing, in my many years' association with missionary societies of different denominations, the need of a book for reading aloud at their meetings—a lively, suggestive, *continued* story, yet so constructed as to be read satisfactorily in monthly instalments.

Being the opposite of sectarian, it seeks to unite all denominations in the noble work of missions, and, it is hoped, will not only prove acceptable to missionary, literary, and sewing societies, but to Sunday-school and other libraries, and to all the dear home circles into which it may enter.

M. E. I.

WASHINGTON, D. C.

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WHAT I TOLD DORCAS:

A STORY FOR MISSION WORKERS.

CHAPTER I.

MRS. ATHELING JOINS A MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

"GOOD-EVENING, Dorcas. I hope I shall not hinder any school work you may have on hand by staying an hour or two with you. Philemon went to a political meeting in the village, and I came with him, for I must tell you of the missionary society we organized at the parsonage last week.

"But first I will mention how glad we are to have you again in your old home after your long absence, and glad you secured the

position of teacher in the school where we were once pupils.

"Yes, Dorcas, you will find many changes; the majority of our old schoolmates have left the neighborhood, the most mischievous urchin is now a missionary in Africa, and the dunce of the school is a judge in Montana.

"A few of them, however, live in their old homesteads; among them Mary Slocum—now widowed; Zedekiah Granger, whose farm adjoins ours; and Sarah Petticord, whom you knew as Sarah Cassimere. She and Simeon live in the old Cassimere home, which was, and is, the finest farm in the neighborhood.

"Speaking of Sarah reminds me of the missionary meeting, and I will proceed to say that about a dozen of us were on hand, not one of whom had ever been at a missionary meeting; and we knew no more about organizing one than would the poor heathen creatures we were going to Christianize. However, the minister and his wife, we hoped, would lead the way, and we were more than willing to follow.

"When we were seated in the parsonage parlor we found that poor Mrs. Chamberlain had one of her terrible spells of neuralgia, and had been in bed all the morning. She managed, however, to creep down to the parlor with the help of Mr. Chamberlain, but hadn't been seated a minute until her face turned as white as a sheet of paper, and she was so faint that she had to be almost carried back; and thus one of our leaders had fallen before the skirmish commenced.

"Well, as soon as Mr. Chamberlain came back, the meeting was called to order, and he remarked that the first business was to elect a president.

"'Some one of you ladies,' said he, 'can nominate the one you consider the most suitable for the position, and we can then put it to vote.'

"He looked around at each of us, and we looked at one another, but nobody spoke.

"'I hope some lady will select a name,' continued Mr. Chamberlain, looking inquiringly at me.

"'Maybe Mrs. Chamberlain wouldn't mind serving,' said I.

"I could see that all the women were glad of their escape, and I felt my face flush with satisfaction that my very first speech in public was such a success.

"But it didn't stay a success, for Mr. Chamberlain asked to have her excused, saying that her attacks of neuralgia were so frequent that it would not be doing justice to herself nor the society to attempt to fill the position; and we agreed in our minds that he was right.

"'Please select another name, ladies,' said he, looking again at me.

"'Maybe Sister Petticord wouldn't mind being president,' said I, looking at Sarah, who didn't give the least sign but what it was the very honor she was longing for; so I flushed again as I said to myself, 'Matilda Atheling, no matter how useful you are in other directions, in a missionary meeting you are certainly a power.'

"What made me so proud of my choice was that I was satisfied in my own mind that if any woman *looked* a president—or a princess, or an empress, for that matter—Sarah Petticord is that one; she is so calm and stately, handsome and dignified.

"And looks isn't all, either; for she accomplishes more in her easy, quiet way than any two women I know. When she takes hold of a Sunday-school, public library, debating society, sewing-class, or anything else, it is bound to succeed; so I knew that our missionary society couldn't be in safer hands, and complimented myself again upon my shrewdness.

"'Who will second the motion?' continued our minister.

"I was so set up with my success as a wire-puller that I was about to give a lift in that direction also, but was saved by poor, timid little Mrs. Primrose piping out 'I do,' her face scarlet at hearing her voice in meeting.

"'It is moved and seconded that Mrs. Pet-

ticord be president,' said Mr. Chamberlain. 'All in favor will please say "Aye!"'

"Everybody responded except Sarah; she was silent, calm, and sweet, her fair face turned slightly upward, as her beautiful dark-blue eyes rested upon a picture over the piano.

"'All opposed say "No!"' continued Mr. Chamberlain.

"'No!' said Sarah.

"'Won't you accept the position, Mrs. Petticord?' inquired our minister, in surprise.

"'No,' replied she; 'I know nothing of mission work, and am not willing to usurp the place of some member who might manage better. I will not take the lead in anything of which I am ignorant.'

"No, Dorcas, we didn't urge; we knew it would be useless, for Sarah's refusal was as unanimous, as one may say, as her election. She meant what she said and said what she meant; and we who knew her well should have known that she would let us nominate

and elect her and not inform us that she wouldn't serve unless we asked her the question. That is her way.

"It called to mind the time that Sarah Cassimere and myself were chosen leaders in a spelling-match. She was, as you know, the brightest girl in school, and always chosen for leader by the side lucky enough to have first choice. I knew that, ten chances to one, she would spell me and all the followers on both sides to their desks, and keep the floor as long as the teacher's patience held out to give her words.

"Well, after a time our side was spelling hers down in a surprising and highly satisfactory way; but Sarah didn't give the least sign that she cared or even noticed that her spellers were deserting her, but was, as usual, smiling and serene.

"Presently the word 'serge' came to me.

"'S-u-r-g-e,' said I, without a shadow of misgiving.

"'S-e-r-g-e,' corrected Sarah, promptly.

"'Sarah is right,' said the teacher, looking at me.

"'I never heard of it being spelled in that way,' said I, reddening, yet certain I was correct.

"'I am to blame for your mistake, Matilda,' said the teacher, kindly; 'I should have mentioned that two words of different meanings are pronounced the same way; to which did you allude?'

"'Why, to the dark, rolling surge,' replied I, recalling the words of an old song.

"'Well,' said Sarah, 'this is not the rolling article; it is stationary cassimere.'

"The teacher smiled and the scholars giggled at Sarah's pun on her own name; but I was in no humor for fun—instead, was growing angry over my mistake, while Sarah stood serene and pretty as a picture.

"'East' was the next word given me.

"'Y-e-a-s-t,' said I, confidently.

"'E-a-s-t,' corrected Sarah, quickly.

"'There are two words pronounced that

way!' exclaimed I, flushing deeply; 'I mean the other one.'

"'What east did you mean, Matilda?' inquired the teacher.

"'The kind you put in bread-dough to make it rise,' I said, defiantly.

"'It wouldn't rise unless you sounded the *y*,' said Sarah. 'Make it *y*east and you will help your bread to rise; give the sun *east* and he will help himself.'

"There was a shout of laughter from the scholars, and while the teacher was rebuking them I went to my seat; and from that day to this, when speaking of rising for bread, I take Sarah's advice and give it a *y*.

"Well, I watched Sarah spelling with the certainty of a machine; and after a time the word 'lie' came to her, and she spelled it l-i-e.

"Now I had gone back to my seat, and hadn't any right to say a word; but before I could think of that I called out 'L-y-e, lie.'

"The spelling was interrupted, and the whole school looked at Sarah to see how she

took it. She made no response, nor did she show by the quiver of an eyelid that she heard me.

"'There is but one kind of "lye" in this lesson,' said I, angrily, 'and that is the one used in making soap, and not the kind which Sarah is acting by standing there instead of sitting at her desk as I am doing.'

"'No, Matilda,' said the teacher, 'there are two "lies" in this lesson; but the one I gave Sarah is the one used in making soap, so as to that point you are right.'

"There wasn't a girl in school except Sarah but would have gone to her seat, or argued that the teacher should have mentioned the kind of 'lie' she gave out; but that was not Sarah's way. She just stood there as placid as a summer sea, waiting her turn to spell, and when it came, spelling right; and her side beat mine, as I was sure it would.

"Well, to proceed with the missionary meeting. We found that being president of one was an honor that went begging. Every

name there was mentioned, but the owners declined; and at length it was settled—a little against her will—that Sister Benson was to be president and Mrs. Chamberlain first vice-president, to help her when needed. They elected me second vice-president, and I said nothing against it, knowing the duties of second vice-president of anything aren't very cumbersome; not that I wish to shirk my share of duty, if I only know what the duty and share are.

"As soon as that point was settled, Mr. Chamberlain said we must appoint committees to visit absent members of the congregation and invite them to join us. There was no trouble in getting names for this; a list was soon made out, with the places each was to go to. Then we proceeded to the next question, which was that of a membership fee.

"There was no trouble about that, either, except that some of the women whispered to one another that they didn't know where the money was to come from.

"Then the next thing was framing the constitution; and Mr. Chamberlain said, if we requested it, he would prepare it in readiness for the next meeting, to which we were glad to agree.

"After it had been decided that all succeeding meetings were to be held in the lecture-room of the church, and a lot of little paper mite-boxes had been brought forward for each of us to select one, Mr. Chamberlain read some thrilling accounts of the condition of the poor creatures in heathen countries, and made a touching prayer that we might each and all be faithful workers in the vineyard of mission work; and the first meeting of the Dorton Missionary Society was over, and had been what might be called a success.

"Well, after I got home, and tea was over, Philemon and I took our accustomed seats before the open fire upon the hearth, he with his *American Farmer*, and I with my knitting. You know, Dorcas, since our son David married and made a home of his own, Philemon

and I are alone in the old homestead of the Athelings; and I am thankful that we have known each other all our lives, and know the same people, for we have so many things to talk of, and are never lonely.

"I mistrusted that missionary meetings would be a subject that Philemon wouldn't be much at home in; but if I wanted to make him acquainted with it, I must wait for a suitable time to give the introduction, which was when he laid down the paper, took his knife from his pocket, and commenced paring one of the big red apples from the plate at his elbow, throwing the parings into the blaze.

"Then said I, 'Philemon!'

"Said he, 'Well!'

"'I was at a missionary meeting this afternoon,' said I; 'it met at the parsonage.'

"'Well, what good did you do?' remarked he, dryly enough.

"'We haven't had time to do any good yet,' said I; 'the greatest undertaking was to elect a president, but we got it done.'

"'And I suppose you have gotten a conviction that you must convert the heathen forthwith.'

"'It's not so much that I have the conviction, Philemon, as that the conviction has me. The subject of missions must be very interesting and popular to have reached Dorton, and now that it is here we want to treat it as well as we can. So we have organized a missionary society, and each of us is to pay a membership fee.'

"'Where do you calculate to get the money?' inquired Philemon, in his dry business tone.

"'Why,' said I, 'the women who have it of their own will use it, and the women who haven't will ask their husbands for it, as I intend doing when the time comes.'

"'But it will take money from our church that is badly needed for repairs—that is what it will do,' said he. 'A new roof must be put on it, or the rain dropping through will loosen the plastering, and the next thing it will fall;

and new spouting is needed, and lots of other improvements. And there are new books needed for the Sunday-school library; what money I have to spare must go there, and toward repairing the church.'

"'Yes, Philemon,' said I, 'you are real good at giving according to your means; but it was agreed at our meeting that our contributions must not come out of what we lay aside for Sunday-school or any church work whatever; it must be extra.'

"'Well, extra or no extra, I haven't a cent to waste on heathen that I know nothing about and don't want to know.' And Philemon took up his paper and went on reading, and I knit away and considered."

CHAPTER II.

MRS. ATHELING'S MEMBERSHIP FEE.

"WHY, good-afternoon, Dorcas. I am so glad that a holiday in your school gave you the opportunity to come to the missionary meeting. And I am glad we both came early; for we have the lecture-room all to ourselves, and can have a good talk before the others come.

"Our society is more than a year old, and certainly progressing; there isn't one meeting that some new name is not added to the list. And it is wonderful how easily the money for the membership fee and mite-boxes was obtained when we made up our minds that it must be had; and I must tell you how I got mine.

"You know that Philemon is one of the

most liberal-minded creatures in the world in proportion to his means—gives to everything that is asked for in the church, and helps everybody that needs help, so far as he can.

"I never saw him flinch until I spoke of the money for the missionary society, when he went so far as to say that he wouldn't give a cent; and I know him well enough not to argue with him at that stage of the business. He takes no interest in the subject, and says there is no need to cross oceans to find heathen; but let him once be convinced that *duty* is at the helm, and there will not be a miserly finger to the helping hand that Philemon Atheling will hold out.

"But that is in the future; what was to be considered was present needs; and one evening as we were sitting, he with his paper and I with my knitting, I began to think over what I could sell that would bring in enough money to pay my fee and put something in the mite-box.

"I couldn't think of anything that could be spared except an old-time patch-work quilt, which had never been used, but kept as a memento of those who had made it more than a hundred years ago.

"I didn't know of any one who needed a quilt; moreover, I have always noticed when one wants to sell anything everybody is well supplied with that very article.

"All at once it came into my mind that Neighbor Peterson, who was intending to move from the neighborhood, was to have a sale, and maybe would allow my quilt to be sold with his goods.

"'Philemon,' said I, when he paused in his reading, and was gazing into the fire as he frequently does.

"'Well?' said he.

"'When is Mr. Peterson to have his sale?'

"'Why, next Thursday. But see here, Matilda, I hope you are not thinking of going. If there is anything I hate more than another it is to see women at sales. They have no

business there; they might as well go to elections.'

"'Yes, Philemon,' said I, 'I suppose they ought to go to elections, but I am not educated up to the point to be sure of it. But I believe that our missionary society will so expand our hearts and enlarge our ideas that we shall consider it a duty to try to reach out a helping hand to our Christian as well as our heathen sisters. I have all the rights I want, but there are plenty of women who haven't; and I really suppose that we who have kind husbands to protect and care for us should try to get a share in making laws in order to benefit other women. But I am not going to the sale—I only asked the question.'

"'But why did you ask the question?'

"'Because I wanted to know.'

"'Well, I was only afraid you wanted to go to bid against yourself, as women generally do at sales.'

"'No; make your mind easy about that, Philemon,' said I, laughing in spite of my-

self. So he picked up his paper and went on reading.

"Well, the next evening I went to the village to see Mary Bassett, and to ask her brother Sidney, who is auctioneer, if he thought Mr. Peterson would be willing to have a quilt put up for sale among his goods.

"He said he was quite sure Mr. Peterson would not object, and all I had to do was to bring it and leave it with Mary; he would see to the rest.

"'But I fear you will be sorry after it is gone, and wish it back,' said Mary.

"'Yes, I would rather not part with it,' said I, 'but I will look upon it as a treasure laid up in heaven.' And then knowing that Mary and Sidney had known Philemon all their lives and thought everything of him, I told them the whole story, assured it would go no farther. They both laughed and said, 'O Mrs. Atheling, you'll fetch him around; he will be going on a mission himself some day.'

"Well, the next evening, when supper was over, and Philemon was seated by the table with his paper and a plate of mellow apples, I went upstairs for the quilt. It was in a linen sheet in the lower drawer of the bureau in the spare room; and the tears came into my eyes when I thought of it being the last time I was ever to see it. I thought of the summer days when I was a child visiting at my grandmother's, when the great event of my day was to look at each scrap of old-time print, and listen to histories of many of them, and wonder how my great-grandmother could have made anything so beautiful when only a few years older than I was then.

"The quilt always retained the fragrance of the roses that my grandmother gathered each June and put with it until the very wood of the bureau was rose-scented; and it seemed, as I gazed upon it, that I could hear the song of the birds in the garden of old-time flowers, and the lazy droning of bees about the eaves of the old stone farm-house.

"I gazed again upon the piece of the gown my grandmother wore the day she first met the young man who afterward became her husband; the piece of pink-and-white print their first babe wore; the scrap of the scarlet jacket which guided the frightened parents to the spot amid the ripening wheat where their little boy had lain down to sleep.

"I didn't tarry long, fearing that I should not be able to part with it; but taking it downstairs I placed it in the hall while I told Philemon I was going up to the village a little while, and then hurried out.

"'Have you set a price upon it, Mrs. Athel-ing?' asked Sidney, after he and Mary had admired it, and wondered over the exquisite manner in which it had been quilted.

"'No,' said I; 'patchwork quilts are old-fashioned, and I cannot expect any one to value it as I do. A handsome white spread can be bought for five dollars; if I get four and a half for this I shall be well satisfied to have it go, so far as price is concerned.'

"'You may depend upon my doing the very best I can for it, Mrs. Atheling,' said Sidney; 'I will not offer it until bidding upon that line of goods becomes spirited. Will you allow me to mention something in regard to its history and mission? I am sure it would attract the interest of bidders, which would insure a fair price for it.'

"'Yes, if you choose, Sidney,' said I; 'it's nothing to be ashamed of; besides, folks won't know whose quilt it is.'

"So I went home with the understanding that I was to come the next evening for the money, and resolving that, no matter how much or how little it might be, a half-dollar should be used as a membership fee and all the rest go into the mite-box.

"In the meantime, Philemon had been exercised in mind in regard to a birthday present for me; for we make it a rule never to let each other's anniversary pass without some little token of remembrance.

"In his pocket-book were two bright ten-

dollar gold-pieces; and he had intended to go to town the next day—as he afterward told me—and buy something with one of them to have in readiness for my birthday, which came upon the day of the missionary meeting for that month, and the day after the sale at Mr. Peterson's.

"But that night it poured rain, and the mud which prevented him from driving to town left him at liberty to go to the sale—which was the most successful of the season; and he resolved to go, and in lieu of the present from town, give me one of the ten-dollar gold-pieces.

"All the farmers in the neighborhood were there—for nothing could be done upon their land—and bought things they had never thought of buying, just for the fun of bidding against one another.

"'Now, gentlemen,' said Sidney, unfolding the quilt and draping it over his arm, 'I have here a specimen of antique work which the wives of all of you will want. It was left in

my charge to be sold for benevolent purposes. It has prints in it over a century old, and, besides its beauty, has the merit of being always useful and comfortable. Now, gentlemen, to prove that I know a good article when I see it, I will give ten dollars as my first bid. Who will say twelve?'

"'Twelve dollars!' shouted a voice in the crowd.

"'Twelve dollars I have—twelve dollars! Gentlemen, we will not let this beautiful article go for twelve dollars; I will give fourteen. Fourteen dollars I have—fourteen dollars—fourteen!'

"'Fifteen dollars!' shouted Philemon; for the thought came to him that I might be as well pleased with a handsome quilt as anything I could buy.

"Sidney Bassett smiled and bowed.

"'Fifteen dollars I have—fifteen dollars—fifteen!'

"'Sixteen!' shouted another voice in the crowd.

"'Sixteen dollars I have—sixteen!—Did you say seventeen?'—nodding to a farmer standing by.

The farmer gave an affirmative nod.

"'Seventeen dollars I have—seventeen d-o-l-l-a-r-s! Anybody want a splendid quilt for a mere song? Eighteen dollars I have—eighteen!'

"'Nineteen!' shouted the voice in the crowd.

"'Nineteen dollars I have—nineteen dollars—nineteen dollars! Gentlemen, all done at only nineteen dollars?'

"'Twenty!' cried Philemon.

"'Twenty dollars I have—twenty dollars! Gentlemen, the quilt is sold for twenty dollars to Mr. Atheling. Now for the next article.'

"Although it took both gold-pieces to pay for it, Philemon was delighted with his bargain; and as soon as the auction was over he pressed his way to Sidney Bassett, paid the money, got a receipt, then asked him to take the quilt home with him and give it into the

care of Mary, as he wished to surprise me with it the next day as my birthday present. So the old quilt passed a second night under the Bassett roof.

"As soon as supper was over, I went to the village; and Mary said, the minute she saw me, 'Dear Mrs. Atheling, your quilt did better than we expected;' and she put into my hands the two ten-dollar gold-pieces; and all I could say was, 'Praise God, from whom all blessings flow.' Mary never mentioned who had bought it, and I did not care to ask her; but thanking her for her and Sidney's kindness, I came home.

"The next morning Philemon went over to the village; and when he came back he had a great package in his hand; and what should it be but the dear old quilt, which had gone out on a mission, and, having accomplished it, returned to its quiet resting-place! Nothing in the wide world that Philemon could have bought with the gold-pieces would have pleased me more; and it was his

money, after all, that was going into the mite-box.

"That afternoon I went to the meeting of our society, and all the mite-boxes were opened, among them mine with its twenty dollars in gold; and I thought it right to give a little account of it.

"'Ladies,' said the president, 'we have spoken of making Sister Atheling our first life-member; I propose her name to-day.'

"And it was seconded, and passed unanimously; and I really think that birthday was one of the very happiest of my life.

"'Ladies,' continued Mrs. Benson, 'these gold-pieces, having such a history, should be used for a special purpose; do any of you know of a great need for that sum?'

"No one spoke for a while, then Sarah Petticord gave her opinion in her usual decided way.

"'I have a cousin,' said she, 'a bright, intelligent young man, who has used up all his means in obtaining a thorough medical edu-

cation. His great object in life is to go to Siam as medical missionary, but he wishes first to learn the language. By the help of books, and instruction from a native of Siam who has an art-store in the city where he resides, he can learn the language in a few months, and the expense would not be over twenty dollars. If Sister Atheling and others are willing, I will write to him this evening and tell him the money is here. After he has learned the language he will apply to his church to send him as missionary.'

"Well, we were all agreed, for we know that enlightening the mind and healing the body go hand in hand in mission work; and we might as well expect a carpenter to build a house without tools as expect a medical missionary to prescribe for a patient and speak of Christ in a language the poor creatures could not understand. It is true the carpenter could borrow tools from some other workman—perhaps as busy as himself—and the missionary might employ an inter-

preter if one were to be had; but the work is hindered and hampered.

"So Sarah Petticord wrote that very evening, and the young man accepted gratefully the offer; the money was sent, he learned the language, sailed for Siam, and at the last meeting of the society Sarah Petticord read a letter from him to the members, and in it were these words, which I heard with happy tears:

"'Since I have taken up the medical mission work here, you cannot know how often I have had occasion to thank God that the means and opportunity were given to me to learn the language before I came, as I can give my whole attention to my patients without hindrance. Our mission has not had a physician here for a number of years, and during that time there was not a place in this, the capital city, with more than four hundred thousand inhabitants, where medical advice or medicine could be obtained by the sick poor. True, the natives have their own

physicians and remedies; but their medical men know nothing of the anatomy of the human body, nor can they perform the most trifling of surgical operations. The remedies are horrible mixtures made from roots and the dried livers and galls, etc., of birds and reptiles, which they give in immense quantities to the poor sufferers, from a pint to two quarts in twenty-four hours being considered ordinary treatment. The first case I had was a man suffering with erysipelas of the head—particularly of the throat. For two weeks he hovered between life and death, and for ten days could not swallow food; and I had to resort to other modes of alimentation. One night I thought he would not live until morning unless there came a great change for the better; and kneeling by his bedside, I prayed aloud in language that he and his friends could understand, asking God to spare his life as a token that it was His work in which I was engaged. I arose believing the man would recover, and he did, and is a faithful

member of the Sunday-school which I organized with native teachers, and also attends our chapel. To every patient I visit I tell the story of the cross, and rejoice that my usefulness is not hindered by having to struggle with the difficulty of making myself understood. For this I again ask God's blessing to rest upon the lady who so generously gave the twenty dollars, and upon all the members of the society who devoted it to this cause.'

"And that is the way I got my membership fee.

"There comes our president, and with her Sarah Petticord, looking as fair and sweet as one of the day-lilies in our garden."

CHAPTER III.

THE ATHELINGS AT THE MISSIONARY CONVENTION.

"No, Dorcas, our talking won't disturb the boy. If he were ill we would keep silent, but he has only broken a limb; his mother is nervous, and feared that fever would set in, and said it would be a comfort to have us watch to-night.

"I have known Tony Hackett from the cradle; he is as hardy as a pine-knot; he will sleep all night, and in a few weeks will be as well as ever.

"We won't whisper, for nothing wakes a well person or torments a sick one like whispering; but we will talk in a low, soothing tone.

"You asked me last evening, as we came

out of prayer-meeting, about the Woman's Convention at Missionburg. I knew there was but little use in trying to tell you of the grand time we had and the people we met, when the sexton was putting out the lights; and instead, was intending to take my knitting this evening, while Philemon was at the committee meeting, and tell you all about it, when who should come in but Tony's little sister to ask me to come to sit up, and to bring you with me. So we can talk the whole night and nobody be the wiser.

"Well, to begin at the beginning. At the May meeting of our Auxiliary Society the subject of the convention at Missionburg was brought up, and a delegate was to be sent. It was decided that the minister's wife should go; and she said it would give her great pleasure if some one of the members could go with her, and turning to me she said:

"'Maybe Sister Atheling can go.'

"'No,' said I, while I was trying to keep down the feeling of disappointment that

would rise in spite of me, 'I can't leave Philemon; he would be so lonely. Now that David is gone, there are none but Philemon and myself; no, I can't go.'

"After the meeting was over, Mrs. Chamberlain came to me and said:

"'Sister Atheling, I do wish you could go. It may seem very selfish in me, but I cannot help saying that the mere thought of your being in Missionburg would do me good, even if you were at one end of the town and I at the other.'

"You see, the poor creature has such terrible times with the neuralgia that I would have been glad to go on her account if no other.

"Well, I came home from the meeting and tried to forget all about the convention, and did not even think it worth while to mention it to Philemon, when he came one evening from a committee meeting in the finest spirits.

"'Matilda,' said he, 'the delegate they appointed for Synod can't go, and they want me to go in his place.'

"'Now, Philemon,' said I, 'I wish I had known that the day of our missionary meeting. They wanted me to go to the Woman's Convention that meets at the same time at Missionburg; but I knew it would be lonely at home for you, so I would not promise; we both could have gone.'

"'A woman's convention!' said he, in a ridiculing tone; 'what do women want of conventions? They ought to leave all such business to men.'

"'It is their privilege and duty to go, Philemon,' said I, calmly.

"'Yes,' said he, in his quizzical fashion, 'I reckon they do consider it their duty to meet now and again to tell one another what a time they have pinching and scrimping to get money for the heathen, and how they have to sacrifice because their stingy husbands won't give them any.'

"No, Dorcas, I didn't say anything to this, for there is no use in arguing unless you are sure of convincing; and Philemon, as I said

before, was not as yet interested in missions, and fussing was not the way to interest him, so I waited my time.

"'Well, Philemon,' said I, 'you were never better fixed to go than now; for David farms the land this year, and will see that all goes on right; the corn is in and doing well, the stock is in good condition, and everything prospering on the place. Your brown suit is in good order, and I will borrow the satchel David bought when he was going on his wedding-journey; and there is nothing in the world to hinder you from going.'

"As soon as supper was over and my bit of evening work done, and Philemon settled by the lamp with his newspaper, I put on my wraps and went to the village to see Mary Bassett.

"'Mary,' said I, 'have you any good black silk among your bonnet fixings? I am intending to make a necktie for Philemon—he is going to the Woman's Convention at Missionburg.'

"Mary was anxious to oblige, and went to searching for the silk; and I was hoping she would find it, when a lot of girls came chattering and laughing into her shop to see about new hats. But first come first served with Mary, no matter if the second comer was Queen Victoria. She found a real nice piece of silk, and I went home.

"When I was half-way from the village the thought struck me that I had told Mary Bassett that Philemon was going to the Woman's Convention; and I just stood in the middle of the road and clasped my hands in worriment, while my face burned like a coal of fire.

"'Matilda Atheling,' said I to myself, 'what ever possessed you to say such a thing? What will Philemon think if he hears it—and it is most likely he will—he who thinks women's conventions so silly?'

"I had a mind to go back and call Mary Bassett aside and ask her to say nothing about it; but I remembered that the girls were there, and I said to myself, 'It is of no

use; if she was going to tell it, she has done it before now.' So I went home. I felt mean as could be when I saw Philemon sitting there so unconscious of what I had said, and I took my knitting and sat down to think it all over.

"I had just worried myself up to the resolve to tell Philemon all about it when it came into my mind, 'Now, Matilda Atheling, leave that worry to the Lord, as you have left many another worry. You did not mean any harm when you said that Philemon was going to a woman's convention, and the Lord will see that no harm comes of it.' And as soon as I realized this, peace came to my heart, and I went to bed happy and contented.

"Well, Dorcas, I got David's satchel, and Philemon's clothes were all neat and fast in it; but the evening before he was to go he said, just as we arose from the supper-table:

"'Matilda, I don't think I will go to Synod as a delegate, or any other way.'

"'Not go!' said I, in astonishment. 'Why,

Philemon! After I have borrowed David's satchel, and got you two new handkerchiefs, and made you a necktie, for you to go and say you don't think you will go!' And I looked searchingly at him, fearing he was not well, and was keeping it from me.

"'No,' said he, reading my thoughts, 'I am well enough, but I don't care to go. There will be plenty there without me, and folks will wonder why they picked on me to go.'

"All at once it flashed into my mind that somebody had told Philemon that I had said he was going to a woman's convention.

"'Philemon,' said I, 'has anybody been twitting you about going to the—' and there I halted; for I would not say Woman's Convention, and my conscience would not let me say Synod, so I said, 'Missionburg?'

"'No,' said he; 'and what would I care if they did? I have a right to go where I please, haven't I?'

"'To be sure you have a right, Philemon, and they must have wanted you to go, or they

would not have asked you.' Then I said to myself, 'Matilda Atheling, why will you allow yourself to be blown about by every passing breeze? Why can't you have a firm conviction that the Lord is never slack concerning His promises?'

"'Yes,' said he, 'they want me, but I don't think I will go.'

"'Maybe you think David can't send over in time in the mornings to attend to the stock?' said I, inquiringly.

"'No, everything will be managed as well as if I were here; but I don't think I will go.'

"'But our minister will be disappointed, and will think you don't care to go with him.'

"'Oh, there will be plenty in the congregation glad to go, and I believe they may, for I don't think I will leave home.'

"'Now, Philemon,' said I, earnestly, 'we have traveled the same road for nearly twenty-five years, and it is not worth while to begin now to speak in that obscure way. Why don't you want to go to Synod as a delegate?'

"'Well,' said he, in a shamefaced way, 'I am afraid I will be lonely among all those strangers without you. I almost wish you had made up your mind to go to the Woman's Convention, although I don't much believe in them. I could have employed Sam Burnside to attend to the stock, that David or his boy might not have to come so early, and the house could have taken care of itself. Why can't you go yet?'

"Now, I did not smile at this, for Philemon was not used to going away from home. In the few visits he had made since he brought me a bride to the farm-house I had always been with him; and I must acknowledge that I felt a little hurt that he had been willing to go to Missionburg without me. But I said nothing, for I always call to mind the saying that we cannot keep uncharitable thoughts from flying about our heads, but we can keep them from building nests in our hair. So I said:

"'That is a fact, Philemon; I would be

lost there without you, and you would be lonely without me; we will both go to Missionburg.'

"I never saw Philemon more pleased; and he said he would go right up to the village and engage Sam Burnside.

"While he was gone I finished my evening's work, and all the time my mind was busy planning. As soon as he came back and was settled comfortably for the evening, I went up to see Mary Bassett, and, as good luck would have it, found her alone.

"'Mary,' said I, 'if you ever worked fast in your life, I want you to work fast now, for I want a new bonnet by eleven o'clock to-morrow; Philemon and I are both going to the Woman's Convention.'

"Mary Bassett is, as you know, one of the most obliging creatures that ever lived, and she said it should be done; so I chose a silver-gray silk, and ribbon to match, and she promised to make a nice bonnet out of it, and I went home.

"Philemon was still reading, and after I sat down with my knitting he said:

"'We will sit together in the cars, Matilda, and will stand a chance of being invited to the same place.'

"I agreed with him, and he went on reading his paper and I went on planning.

"The next morning the bonnet came home in good time, and we set off upon our journey; and although the cars were full, we got a seat together, Philemon next the window, so he could look out at the farms we passed. And I never did see anybody enjoy a trip more. He saw every sheep and cow on that side of the track, and every now and again he would say, 'Matilda, that corn is not quite so good as ours;' or, 'That corn is a little ahead of ours;' and I was glad that he was not a bit discouraged because it was better.

"When we got to Missionburg you would have thought the Synod and convention had both met at the station. There were a goodly number of kind-looking women waiting for

the train, and such a shaking of hands and kissing you never saw; and one sweet-faced sister came to me, and said she:

"'Mrs. Atheling, you are to come to my house; just take a seat in the station, please, until I collect my party.'

"I went in, and who should I see but our minister's wife, who had come the day before. She jumped up and threw her arms around me, and said she:

"'You dear old dear! If I had known you were out there you would not have found me sitting here.'

"She led me to a seat, and when we looked up there was Philemon, who had come in to find me; and our minister's wife shook hands with him and thanked him for bringing me.

"Before he had time to sit down, up came our minister, and with him another one, who welcomed us to Missionburg.

"'Brother Atheling,' said our minister, 'you are the very man we are looking for.' And the last time I saw Philemon for that

day he was being walked off between two preachers, looking for all the world like a poor lonely sparrow among blackbirds.

"After quite a number of us women were collected, we went home with the sister who had welcomed me; and it was a nice home—everything complete and comfortable, and everybody so kind. And as I folded my shawl and laid my bonnet on it in the room I was to share with a sister from Nebraska, I wondered if Philemon was faring as well as I; and though sure he was, I knew he would be lonesome; and just as I had borrowed that trouble, and was entertaining it as well as if I enjoyed its company, the thought came to me, 'Matilda Atheling, what a poor creature you are! Philemon is in the Lord's keeping in Missionburg as at home; He brought him safely here, and will take care of him now that he is here.' So I felt comforted, and went down to a nice supper and enjoyed it; for we had taken an early dinner, that I might leave all in good order.

"The next day we all went to the church where the convention was to be held. It was full, and everybody was glad to see every other body; and there were addresses of welcome and greeting, and reports read; and we had lunch and music, and after that speeches; and I never enjoyed anything as much as I did that convention. I had not a care in the world, except now and then I wondered how Philemon was, and hoped he enjoyed Synod as well as I did the convention.

"I didn't see him the whole of that day, nor the next, until afternoon. Everything was going along as smooth as silk in our convention, and just as the president rose to say something, the door opened, and a whole lot of ministers and delegates and other brethren came in, and took seats wherever they could find them. I suppose there was some business before Synod which they considered dry, so they came around to see that we women weren't getting into mischief. I was busy watching them and wondering where they

could find places (for a woman missionary from foreign parts was to speak, and everybody had come to see the queer clothes she was to wear), when who should I see but Philemon, looking, I knew to a certainty, more for me than for a seat.

"I counted the people in the pew I was in, and then those in the one before me, and found the latter would hold one more. So I leaned forward, and touching a girl on the shoulder, I said:

"'Dear young sister, if you want to do as great a Christian kindness as you ever did in your life, move along and make room for a poor lonely creature near me.'

"She smiled and did as I told her, and I stood up and beckoned to Philemon; and he came quicker than I ever saw him walk, and dropped into the seat as if he had found a little piece of home.

"As soon as the commotion of getting the men settled was over, the president rose and said we would proceed to business. She had

a letter in her hand, and remarked that before she would introduce the speaker she would tell us some glad tidings; and it was that the society had received the gift of fifteen hundred dollars, which had encouraged her to ask the convention to increase it to two thousand, which could be used in the manner which seemed most pressing.

"Before she could take her seat, up jumped one of the ministers, and said he:

"'I move that it be used in building a mission church in Indian Territory.'

"'I second the motion,' said the delegate from his church.

"Before he could sit down, another minister was on his feet, saying that in his opinion the most pressing need was a bungalow which ought to be built at some tongue-twisting place way out in foreign parts, which I couldn't pronounce if I knew, but which he had as pat as if he had been saying nothing else from his cradle.

"'I second that motion,' said his delegate.

"And such a confusion I never heard; for so far as I knew, every man in the house had his own plan for using that money, either for Sunday-school libraries, repairing their churches, paying off the debt on them, or something else.

"The women sat quiet for a while, then the officers looked at one another and at the president, who in a calm, serene manner struck the bell, and said in a clear, decided tone:

"'The house will please come to order.'

"And it did come to order, quicker than I thought possible. The men dropped into their places and looked at one another, and settled their attention upon the meeting just as though the whole affair had been decided in their favor, and never said another word as long as they stayed.

"The president introduced the speaker, and you might have heard a pin drop the whole time her speech lasted. Time and time again I saw Philemon putting his handkerchief to his eyes, and plenty of the women

shed tears at hearing of the heartrending scenes she had witnessed in that heathen country where the poor creatures knew no better, and we taking good care they shouldn't. She spoke of them as though she loved them as she did her own kin, and we could almost see them holding out their arms to meet us more than half-way.

"When she sat down there was silence for a while; then a lady dressed in deep mourning arose, and said, 'Sisters, I had a lovely daughter, eighteen years of age; since we last met I have lost her. When my husband heard I was coming to this convention, he put two hundred dollars in my hand, to be used in any way I thought best, as a memorial of her. It does not require a costly tombstone to keep us in remembrance of our darling. I wish to use this money in a way she and my husband would approve; I give it in memory of her to the society.'

"When she sat down no one spoke; everybody seemed awed into silence. Then the

president rose and thanked her in the name of the society; and just as she took her seat, Philemon turned and whispered something to me, and I nodded a glad, happy nod, and he rose up just where he was, and said:

"'Sisters!'

"The people all turned to look at him, and my heart nearly stood still, for I was afraid he would forget what he intended to say, and they would smile. But no, he kept straight on; and if he had been Solomon in all his glory, the meeting could not have paid him more attention.

"'Sisters!' said he again, turning partly around to me, 'Matilda and I have but one child—a son. For nearly three years of his life, before he was twenty, we would have been rejoiced to know that he was safe in our Father's house, above and beyond all temptation; for our boy was a drunkard. Time and time again he signed the pledge and broke over. He went in debt to the amount of three hundred dollars, and as he was a

minor, they came on me for the money. Minor or no minor, they knew I would pay it if it took my last dollar. But before that came to pass the Lord took him in hand; He converted our boy's heart, and made of him a Christian. He has never taken a drop of liquor since, and we have faith that he never will. Two years ago he came to me, and said he, "Father, that three hundred dollars you spent for me is in the bank ready for you. Do what you please with it; all I ask is never to see it again." Ever since then, Matilda and I have been considering what would be the best use to make of that money, seeing it is not enough to build anything with, and too much to give to any one who has no claim upon us. After hearing about the tombstone, I have thought we could not do better than give it to you; and Matilda agrees with me, so the money is yours.'

"Philemon had taken his seat when a new thought came into his mind, and he rose to say more.

"'Sisters,' said he, 'our son was converted in a Methodist meeting, he married a Methodist girl, he leads in a Methodist class-meeting, and his child was baptized by a Methodist preacher. We would rather our boy had come into the church where he was received in baptism when a baby, but Matilda and I are too—' and here Philemon came to a dead stop.

"'O Philemon,' said I to myself, while cold creeps ran up and down the spine of my back, 'why didn't you let well enough alone, and stop when you had said your say? You'll never get a word to fit in there, if you chase through the whole dictionary, and will have to sit down in shame and confusion of face. What did possess you to begin again, and drag me in to add to your burden?'

"But just then his eyes lighted; he broke into a smile, and straightened himself, and, like we children used to do at school when we wanted to jump over the trunk of a fallen tree, he ran back in his words, and said he:

"'Matilda and I would rather our son would be in the church with us; but we are not so hidebound that we cannot rejoice that he is walking in the strait and narrow path, no matter through what church that path leads him.'

"Then Philemon sat down all in a tremble; and I just leaned forward and put my two arms about his neck and gave him one of the gratefulest kisses I ever gave in my whole life.

"There wasn't a word said in the convention for about a minute; then the president said, 'Let us pray,' and we all knelt down; for not one of us felt like standing up or sitting still, or any other way most accommodating to ourselves; but we *knelt*, as the Lord commanded us, while she prayed. And such a prayer I never heard from mortal lips, her voice trembling as though tears were not far away. There was no need for the convention to thank Philemon—she did it for them in her prayer.

"After the session was over she came up

and shook hands with Philemon and me; and plenty of the best-dressed women in the house shook hands with him, thanked him for his good, brave words, and said they were proud to know him.

"This was the last day of the convention, for it was to be but two days, while Synod was to be three; and after the women began to leave, I told Philemon it was the last day, but there would be a meeting in the evening.

"Then said he:

"'If you go home I might as well go too.'

"So it was agreed upon that we should meet at the depot the next morning, and decide what was better to do; and then Philemon went his way, and I went mine.

"That evening at the tea-table I happened to be seated next to a young minister; and after the blessing was asked he turned to me, and said he:

"'That was a very interesting meeting this afternoon. I had no idea the ladies had so much executive and parliamentary ability.'

"'Yes,' said I, 'women can manage very well if not meddled with.' Then, looking more intently at him, I noticed it was the zealous creature who had been the first to say where the money should be used; so I said, 'Oh well, men are not to blame; they have been educated that way. It may perhaps take the whole of this generation before they will have a realizing sense that women have a need of money, and the whole of the next before they will believe that women know how to use it.'

"I saw he wasn't convinced, but I had done my Christian duty, and so changed the subject.

"I went to the depot early the next morning, and found Philemon waiting and watching for me.

"'Matilda,' said he, eagerly, 'we will go home; several of the ministers are going, and there is no need of a delegate—and a second-hand one at that—staying if he wants to go home.'

"So we came; and as much as Philemon enjoyed the trip to Missionburg, I could see that he enjoyed the one coming home better. We found the house as we left it; and while Philemon went over the place to see that all was right, I prepared one of our comfortable little dinners, and we enjoyed it and were grateful.

"I never realized until supper was over, and I had taken up my knitting, that Philemon had, after all, been to a woman's convention, and the Lord had taken care of the matter in His own way.

"Just see how well Tony sleeps! Do you take a nap, Dorcas; I know you are tired from teaching all day, and there is no need of both of us watching."

CHAPTER IV.

MRS. ATHELING'S CONTRIBUTING MEMBER.

"GOOD-EVENING, Dorcas; it was real sweet and kind in you to come over this evening and be company for me while Philemon is at the committee meeting. Draw up his chair to the hearth and make yourself comfortable.

"I have been wishing for a chance to tell you of a new contributing member I got for our missionary society, and this is the very time.

"You see, the president remarked, at one of our meetings, that there were plenty of people in the congregation whom it did not suit to attend the meetings, but who would, she thought, be willing to give a monthly contribution; so a committee was chosen to ask

them. There is never any trouble in getting committees for visiting; eight of us were more than willing to go, and we had slips of paper with our visiting-places upon them.

"Well, on my way home I passed Joel Hollingsworth's; and seeing his daughter-in-law, Ethel, sitting in the porch with her embroidery, I stopped to chat awhile with her, told her where I had been, and showed her my list of places to visit for contributions.

"The Hollingsworths, you know, are Quakers, and rich; and there are only three in the beautiful home—Joel, his son Frank, and Ethel, to whom Frank was married in June, the week after Philemon and I got home from the convention at Missionburg.

"I have known Ethel from a baby—for she lived with her uncle, James Barnard, whose farm adjoined ours—and I know her to be good and lovely in disposition, and one of the prettiest creatures, with a pure, sweet face, like pictures of the Madonna.

"Frank and our son David were great

I STOPPED TO CHAT AWHILE WITH HER. (Page 66.)

friends, and he told David about his being engaged to Ethel; but his father refused consent, and Ethel would not marry him without it, nor go to live where she was not wanted.

"Joel's wife died several years ago, and if Frank could have married Ethel and brought her there, he and Joel would have been spared many lonely hours—no one in the great house with them except the people in the kitchen.

"But Joel Hollingsworth was always known as one of the most stiff-necked creatures in existence; and just because he had some contrary dealings with James Barnard about a line-fence, he wouldn't let Frank marry Ethel.

"The whole neighborhood believed that he would never give in; and you may know how surprised we were when we heard that Frank and Ethel had passed meeting, and would be married as soon as the rules of the Society allowed it after they passed.

"You see, my family on my father's side were Quakers, or, what is more polite to say,

Friends; and I was brought up as one, used the plain language, and knew all about their discipline and belief, and have the warmest kind of feelings for them. They are as purely Christian people as ever lived; and there is no sect so little understood outside of their own denomination, and for that reason they are found fault with by people who will not go to the trouble to find out what their doctrine really is. I always attended Friends' meeting until I married, but wasn't a member, because my father married out of the Society, and mother did not wish to leave her own church to be taken into it. Father wouldn't acknowledge to the committee appointed to wait upon him that he was sorry for going outside the Society to find a wife, so was disowned, and we children lost our birthright.

"However, that didn't make much difference with me, for I would have married Philemon anyway, and been disowned for it; so father saved them the trouble.

"Well, as I was saying, Ethel looked as sweet as a rose that beautiful evening sitting in the wide, cool porch, the yard around it filled with every fragrant flower you could think of; and I did wonder to myself what good angel had brought the obstinate will of Joel Hollingsworth to its senses, and allowed him and Frank the great blessing of having this lovely young creature preside over their home.

"She was dressed in white, a bunch of rosebuds was on her breast, and a bud in her beautiful brown hair.

"When I opened the gate and went in, the loveliest tinge of color came to her face because of her pleasure at seeing me; then she gave me a rocking-chair, a fan, and a glass of water, and gently urged me to take off my bonnet and take tea with them.

"But I said no, for Philemon would be expecting me; but I would come again and stay longer. So we chatted away as cheery as wrens; and I had told her all about our mis-

sionary meeting and then was walking down the path on my way home, when Ethel, who was going with me to the gate, said I must have a bunch of roses, and was soon snipping right and left with her embroidery scissors.

"As I watched her flitting about I thought how blessedly thankful Frank must be to see that bright being there where hired help had ruled, and wondered for the dozenth time what had won over haughty old Joel.

"But Ethel could always read people's thoughts before they could get them straightened out in their own minds; and when we came to the gate and she gave the great bunch of fragrant roses into my hand, she said, in her gentle voice:

"'What disturbs thee, Friend Matilda? Thee appears to have something on thy mind.'

"'Yes, Ethel,' said I; 'and not only on my mind, but on the mind of the whole neighborhood. We cannot imagine what changed Joel Hollingsworth's feelings sufficiently to allow

Frank to bring you here, when that line-fence between him and your uncle Barnard stands just where it did.'

"'Now,' said she, smiling and blushing, 'what would thee think if I should tell thee that Selim was the peacemaker, and it is to him we owe our present happiness?'

"'To Selim!' said I, in astonishment; 'you don't certainly mean Frank's beautiful Arabian horse?'

"'Yes, I mean the Arabian, Selim; would thee like to hear the story?'

"'I should say I would,' said I, emphatically; 'and Philemon or no Philemon waiting for me, I must stop to hear it.'

"So we went back to the porch, and Ethel talked and I listened.

"'Thee knows, Friend Matilda,' said she, 'that early last spring I applied for the position of teacher of the district school; so I will commence from that date, and tell thee how Selim shortened our probation.

"'Thee was a near neighbor, and knows

that I was as a daughter in Uncle Barnard's house; but I had nothing to employ my time, and wishing to make use of the good education which he had given me was my reason for desiring the position.

"'Uncle was one of the trustees of the school; and the afternoon they met in the village to select a teacher from the many applicants, I stood by the window of the farmhouse which commanded a view of the road by which he must come, watching for him.

"'At length he appeared, and before the carriage halted at the gate, I flew out to ask the question of such interest to me.

"'"Did they give me the position, uncle?" said I, eagerly.

"'"No, Ethel, I am sorry to tell thee that it was given to a widow woman who once lived in the neighborhood, and who is dependent upon her own exertions for support. I cannot but acknowledge that they were just when they agreed that thee was well placed and did not need to work for thy living. I

am sorry for thy disappointment, but rejoice for thy aunt Barnard's sake and my own."

"'"But, uncle, it was no affair of theirs that thee was so kind as to give me a good home; what I long for is employment," said I, half weeping.

"'"I did all I could for thy cause, Ethel," replied uncle; "I mentioned that thee was a graduate of one of our best colleges, and loved to impart thy knowledge to children. But it was of no avail; for I could have told thee before leaving home that, as Joel Hollingsworth is one of the trustees, there would be no chance for thee. He is one that never forgives nor forgets, and that line-fence between his pasture-land and mine has made him my enemy. I had the land surveyed, and know I am right, so cannot in conscience remove the fence at his bidding; therefore I suppose that he will remain my enemy as long as we both live."

"'"But, uncle," said I, "there is another trustee; did he also go against me?"

"'"He did, because he was influenced by Joel, who is his brother-in-law; and he wishes to stay in favor with Joel, who, thee knows, has great possessions."

"'I was so disappointed, Friend Matilda, that I could scarcely keep back my tears; but making an effort to steady my voice, I told uncle that aunt was sent for to take tea at Friend Pyle's, and they expected him also.

"'"I am sorry I could bring thee no better news, Ethel, but no doubt it is all for the best," said uncle, kindly, as he bade me farewell, and turned Dobbin's head toward the road again; and I went back to the house.

"'I knew, Friend Matilda, that Uncle Barnard sympathized with me; but kind and sagacious as he is, he did not fathom the cause and depth of my disappointment. The opposition of Friend Hollingsworth was far deeper than he suspected.

"'Uncle knew that Frank was a regular visitor at our house, and that his beautiful black Arabian, Selim, was as much at home

in our stable as in that of Joel Hollingsworth. But he did not know that Frank had pleaded with his father to consent to his marriage with me, and had been coldly and bitterly repulsed.

"'But I knew it all; and sadly calling to mind the unrelenting nature of Friend Hollingsworth, I resolved never to be the one to separate Frank from his home and his father, which he had besought me to do.

"'So, as I sat by the window in the twilight thinking over all these things, I could control my feelings no longer, and tears fell like summer rain upon my clasped hands. Besides, it was really a luxury to weep, with no one to witness it except the great house-dog, who gazed upon me with tender compassion in his intelligent eyes.

"'The light of the full moon was flooding the place, when my reverie was disturbed by the trampling of a horse's hoofs and the mingled threats and entreaties of a subdued voice.

"'"Whoa there, Selim! Thou unruly beast, what possesses thee? Come now, Selim! Come now, good beast! Whoa, Selim! Whoa now! Whoa!"

"'I sprang to the window, looked out, and seeing at one glance how matters stood, tears of mirth took the place of those occasioned by disappointment. Friend Hollingsworth had driven Selim to the trustees' meeting, and in going home past Uncle Barnard's, the horse had of his own sweet will turned into the familiar lane, and having reached his accustomed post, saw no reason at that time in the evening for moving on.

"'Though as gentle as a lamb, Selim was, for the time, showing a determination equal to that of Friend Hollingsworth, who, pale with exasperation and chagrin, finding entreaties of no avail, reached for the whip and gave the animal a sudden stinging cut with it, upon which Selim stood straight up and pawed the air with his fore feet.

"'Thoroughly frightened, Friend Hollings-

worth attempted to spring from the carriage; but catching his foot in the rein, he fell heavily to the ground, while I left the window and flew to his help.

"'At the sound of my voice, Selim turned his beautiful eyes upon me, neighed softly, and stood still. Patting him gently, I slipped the strap in the ring in the post, tied him securely, and then went to my fallen foe.

"'"I hope thee is not hurt," said I, feeling truly sorry for him; "will thee let me assist thee to thy feet?"

"'"I do not believe I can stand," replied he, in a trembling voice; "I jumped out—for I feared the beast would fall back on me—and I think my ankle is broken."

"'And really, Friend Matilda, seeing his pallor and the position in which he was lying, I feared he was correct.

"'"Oh, I hope not," said I; "just lie still a moment until I get a cane for thee to lean upon, and I will help thee into the house."

"'I ran in and arranged the lounge in

readiness for him; then returned, helped him to rise, and, giving him the cane, bade him lean upon my shoulder; and by slow degrees we reached the house, and he sank, almost fainting, upon the lounge.

"'With the aid of restoratives he soon revived; and, lighting a lamp, I set about examining the wounded ankle.

"'"I have taken a full course in anatomy," said I, "and can soon tell thee if any bones are broken."

"'He made no reply, and I gently and speedily made a thorough examination, finding no fracture nor dislocation—nothing more than a bad sprain; and the moment he was assured of this the color came back to his face, and he breathed a sigh of relief.

"'"There is nothing better for a sprain," said I, "than an application of moist earth; excuse me a moment, and I will prepare it."

"'Friend Hollingsworth made no objection, so I left the room and in a few moments returned with the clay and bandages; and,

when applied, he acknowledged that it gave instant relief.

"'"Blessings upon thee!" said he, humbly; "thou art a girl in a thousand."

"'"Uncle and Aunt Barnard were invited to take tea at Neighbor Pyle's," said I, quickly, to conceal my pleasure at his sincere praise, "and I was about to make a cup of tea for myself when I heard thy voice at the gate. I will prepare it, and will enjoy it much more now that I have thy company to share it."

"'"Must thee prepare it? Hast thou no help?"

"'"Norah is away this week upon her yearly visit, and will not be at home until late this evening. Our man has gone to the station to meet the train that brings her," said I.

"'Frank had dropped hints of his father's tastes in the culinary line, and I am glad to remember that I prepared a supper which suited him perfectly. And since I became

his daughter-in-law he has told me how he watched me as I flitted about, and mentally berated his own short-sightedness and obstinacy.

"'When supper was ready I drew the center-table in front of the lounge, placed a footstool under it for the wounded ankle, and Friend Hollingsworth arose to take his tea. Cheerful chat accompanied the meal, and he did fair justice to the viands, and said he could not remember when he had so enjoyed a meal.

"'It was scarcely finished when I heard the roll of wheels; and, making an excuse for leaving the room, I hurried out to meet uncle and aunt, that they might not be taken by surprise at sight of their unexpected guest.

"'They came in as placidly as if seeing Friend Hollingsworth reclining upon their lounge was of frequent occurrence, welcomed him warmly, and inquired anxiously what was the cause of the accident.

"'"I never drove Selim until this after-

noon," said Friend Hollingsworth, "but always knew the beast to be gentle and tractable; therefore was totally unprepared for his bolting up thy lane, and refusing to move from thy post."

"'Uncle Barnard strove to maintain a grave countenance, as became his age and sect and the circumstances, but it was of no use; in spite of his endeavors, he burst into a hearty peal of laughter, in which he was joined by aunt and me, and finally by Friend Hollingsworth.

"'"And now," said our guest, wiping tears of mirth from his eyes, "if thee will add to the kindness which I have received under this roof by taking me home in thy carriage with old Dobbin, I will send Frank for Selim; for I have had enough of him for one day."

"'Uncle agreed gladly, tenderly assisted his vanquished foe to a place in the carriage, and they drove slowly and peacefully away.

"'"The inner light will not let me say that the line-fence is in the right place," said

Friend Hollingsworth, as they reached his own gate, "but it prompts me to forgive, and to ask forgiveness. I am sorry for my enmity against thee and thine; let us be friends."

"'"I have never been aught but a friend to thee, Joel," said Uncle Barnard, pressing the hand of his neighbor; "but I rejoice that we will henceforth live as becometh our peaceable profession."

"'Thus thee sees, Friend Matilda, it was all for the best that I did not get the district school, for Frank would have insisted upon my resignation.

"'Father Hollingsworth gave free and cordial assent to our union, welcomed me to his home, and no father could be kinder to me; and I strive to be a faithful daughter to him. Thee may be sure we value Selim for his share in the affair, for he performed the duty worthy of all commendation—that of peacemaker.'

"'Well, Ethel,' said I, as I again tied my bonnet-strings, 'I am real glad you told me

this, and gladder that you are mistress of this beautiful home; and it is no wonder that Joel Hollingsworth was sorry for his stiff-neckedness, for I know that you and Frank make him happy and comfortable. And now I must be thinking of my home and Philemon.' And I took up my roses.

"'Thee was speaking of contributing members of thy missionary society, and of thy list not being as full as that of thy friends; does thee object to having one of another denomination upon thy list? If not, thee can put my name down as a contributing member, and I will give now my contribution for this month.'

"'Indeed, Ethel, we would be glad as could be to have you,' said I, flushing with joy as she put a greenback into my hand. 'I never expected it of you, and that makes it all the more a joyful surprise.'

"Well, Dorcas, I went home feeling that there was one substantial contributing member upon the list, if we never get another. I

knew that the Barnards and Ethel gave liberally when asked for a contribution for our Sunday-school library, and knew also that, as a class, the Quakers are first-rate workers in the mission cause, particularly among the Indians; but I wasn't sure that they would put their names on the list as contributing members of other denominations.

"When I got home I told Philemon, and he said:

"'Well, Quaker or no Quaker, that woman is a Christian.'"

CHAPTER V.

THE ATHELINGS AFTER THE MISSIONARY CONVENTION.

"I HAVE brought my knitting, and will sit with you, Dorcas, until Philemon calls for me on his way back from a political meeting at Dorton.

"I am a little late, for I went on to the village with him and called to see Mrs. Hackett; I haven't been there since the night we watched with Tony, when I told you of our trip to the missionary convention at Missionburg.

"It does not seem possible that so much time has elapsed since we were there; but when folks live day by day as do Philemon and I, life is so full of interest that time flies too fast for all we plan to do.

"I see you look surprised; but there are two ways of living day by day, and I will tell you how we came to make the resolution.

"Well, one evening we were sitting by our hearth, Philemon reading and I knitting, when I noticed that he had put down his paper and was gazing into the fire in deep thought.

"After a while he said, 'Matilda.'

"Said I, 'Well?'

"'Those were true and stirring words that I read in a book while we were at Missionburg—you at the convention and I at Synod; somehow I cannot get them out of my mind.'

"'What was the book, Philemon,' said I, 'and where did you see it?'

"'It was on the table in the room I slept in, and was called "Silent Times"; and the other delegate who slept in the room with me said it was written by a Presbyterian minister. The time has been when I would have been too narrow-minded to praise anything

said or done outside our own church, or to believe a preacher outside our denomination could write anything it would do me good to follow.

"'But, Matilda, it was certainly the word in season that we read about, and I could have shed tears over the thought that God so loved me that He thought fit to point out my weakness and want of charity. I missed you so much, Matilda, and was so lonesome and miserable, that I suppose it helped the words to take such a deep hold upon me; but be that as it will, when I reach the other shore I hope to clasp hands with that dear Presbyterian brother, and thank him for his helpful words.'

"'What were the words, Philemon?' said I, softly, my eyes full of tears.

"'There were many things which I had often thought, but never could have fixed up as he did; but the main thing was what he said about living day by day.'

"'Day by day, Philemon?' said I, in sur-

prise. 'How can we live any other way?—and I guess most of us are glad to get the chance.'

"'Yes, but it gives a plan to live right. Read it aloud, Matilda,' said he, taking a slip of paper from his old pocket-book; 'I copied it.'

"So I laid my knitting down and read:

"'It ought not to be hard to live well one day. Any one should be able to remember God and keep his heart open toward heaven, and to remember others who are in need and suffering about him, and keep his hand stretched out in helpfulness, for just one day. Yet that is all there is to do. We never have more than one day to live. We have no to-morrows. God never gives us years, nor even weeks; He gives us only days. If we live each day well, all our life will, in the end, be radiant and beautiful.'

"'They are true and stirring words, Philemon,' said I, as I gave the paper back to him and resumed my knitting—'as true and stirring words as I ever heard. But what time had you for reading in Missionburg?'

"'It was while we waited for supper the evening of that meeting of the Woman's Convention where I had given the three hundred dollars. Everybody had praised and thanked me at the meeting for what I had said and done, and I was in fine spirits and a good deal puffed up that I had done so well. But as soon as I was back in the room where I slept, a great wave of discouragement rolled over me, and I could have shed tears over my conceit and narrow-minded notion that I had done something great.

"'"Philemon Atheling," said I to myself, "you think you have done a great thing to give three hundred dollars to missions. Well, what if you have? What use is three hundred dollars to convert millions of heathen? It won't be a drop in the bucket; and it is all you have to give, and no prospect of being able to spare any more. What is the sense of you rejoicing over your paltry help?"

"'Matilda, I was so ashamed and disheartened that I felt I could never look at the

people again, and longed for you to come and say you wanted to go home. Just then my eyes lighted upon "Silent Times" lying upon the table, and I picked it up, and it opened of itself at the very page which had the words I copied out. It was one of my silent times and lonesome times and desponding times, and the very name of the book seemed soothing; and when I read the words, my heart gave a throb of joy, and I said to myself:

"'"Philemon Atheling, you have done all you could for just one day; don't try to take the planning out of God's hands, but trust Him to show you what to do next."

"'With those words in my mind, Matilda, I have tried day by day to do something for the poor heathen. Some days I have laid by a little money that I could spare; some days I got the chance to speak a word for them to somebody that had the means to help if they could only be persuaded to have the will; and sometimes I could do nothing except offer a prayer for them; and the days I could

do only that seem more frequent than the others.'

"'Well, Philemon,' said I, 'the greatest comfort is that God does not ask us to do what we can't do; and most likely the very days that you could do nothing but offer a prayer for the poor benighted creatures were the days when God made the best use of you. You have done something this day by giving me those lines to read. Day by day we will live right, Philemon, and we won't fret because we can't see the results of what we have been able to do, but let God attend to that.'

"'Yes,' said Philemon, brightening up; 'all we have to do is to keep a sharp lookout, and not let a day slip by without showing some good deed, however small.'

"A few evenings after this, as Philemon and I were sitting by the fire, a thought came to me as clearly as if somebody had spoken it in my hearing.

"'Philemon,' said I.

"'Well?' said he.

"'You haven't heard from your sister Tabitha, who lives way out in Minnesota, for a long time. You know her husband died and left her very rich. She has no children to give her property to, and I believe if it were put into her mind to help the heathen, she would out of her great abundance give liberally; suppose you ask her?'

"'The very thing to do!' said Philemon, as eager as I ever saw him. 'She ought to give according as God has prospered her; let us write to her this very evening.'

"So I got the pen, ink, and paper, and we wrote as long and affecting a letter as we ever wrote in our lives. We told her all we knew about the poor creatures in heathen lands, and asked her, in the name of the dear Saviour who died for us all, to help them, as He had commanded us to do. Philemon went so far as to say that he had given three hundred dollars, although we were afraid it sounded like boasting. However, we had to tell of the convention at Missionburg, and the three

hundred seemed to fit in, so we let it stay; and when the letter was done, folded, put in the envelope, sealed, and the stamp put on it, all ready to send to the village in the morning, Philemon rubbed his hands in glee.

"'Matilda,' said he, 'we certainly have done our work for this one day, and done it well.'

"'Yes,' said I, 'and to-morrow the letter will start on its mission; and if we can do nothing else, we can pray that it may be seed sown in good ground.'

"'Yes,' said he; 'I would not wonder if Tabitha sends a check for a good sum.'

"Well, bright and early the next morning, Philemon took the letter to the post-office; and we went about all day with a smile in our hearts, for we hoped that Tabitha would do her share, and we knew that would be a liberal one. But we waited and waited; and of evenings when Philemon came from the village, I asked if he had a letter from Sister Tabitha, and he would shake his head and

say, 'Not yet, but it will come.' Then I stopped asking, but would look at his hand or his pocket when he came in. Then I stopped even that, for I didn't want him to notice it; and we said no more about Sister Tabitha and her money for the heathen.

"At length, one evening, Sam Burnside rapped at the door, and left us a letter on his way from the village to sit up with a sick neighbor. It was from Sister Tabitha, and I don't think I was ever quicker in lighting the lamp and getting out my knitting and sitting down to hear Philemon read it; and I never saw him so slow and particular as he was—just like a child that wanted to feast its eyes upon some dainty before eating it. He took out his spectacles and put the case carefully back in its place. Then he took a piece of old kid glove from his vest-pocket and polished them until I began to think that he had engaged himself to polish by the hour and was bound to do his duty faithfully. Then he took up the letter and looked scanningly at

the postmark, then at the writing, then at the seal, with the three letters twisted together on it, then at the stamp to see, it appeared, if the people way out in Minnesota used the same kind that we did. Then he smelled it, and said it reminded him of the fragrance of the little blue violets which Tabitha gathered with him down in the rich, moist woods, when they were children. Then he held it up between himself and the light to see whether it had a check or greenbacks inside; and after I got so fidgety that I was dropping stitches in my knitting, Philemon concluded to open his letter, thinking maybe it was as good a way as any to find out what was in it.

"Well, he read it first to himself, and I noticed that his face was getting longer and longer; but he kept on reading and said nothing. At last I began to drop stitches again, and said I, 'Philemon.'

"'Well?' said he, but kept on reading.

"After a while he came to the end, and then he began again and read it aloud to me;

and I laid down my knitting and listened more intently than I ever did to the reading of a letter in my whole life.

"Sister Tabitha commenced her letter 'Dear Brother Philemon,' and ended it 'Your affectionate sister'; but what lay between those two promontories was mighty swampy land, and, I mistrusted, not worth trying to cultivate. There was neither check nor greenbacks, but a vast deal of stuff about the society life she was leading, and its demands upon her; and the great amount of money it took to entertain handsomely, as one in her position was expected to do; and the rich jewels and wardrobe she was compelled to have to maintain her position. She had just returned from Saratoga, where she passed her summers, and she told Philemon if he only knew what it cost her to keep her carriage and horses, her coachman and footman and maid at the Springs, he would never think of asking her to give money to people she knew nothing of, and who had no use for money,

like those uncivilized creatures, the heathen. She said she never imagined that a person having the solid sense that Philemon used to have would have thrown away three hundred dollars as he had done; and if he found himself in the poorhouse through his silly squandering of his hard-earned money on the heathen, he need not look to her to help him out, for she would not let him have a dollar.

"I never saw a person so cut up in my whole life as Philemon was by that letter. He sat still and looked dreamily into the fire, and I knit away and said nothing.

"'Matilda,' said he, after a time.

"'Well?' said I.

"'Riches must have changed her, Matilda; yes, changed her past knowing. She is not the same person she was when she was Tabitha Atheling, and we played about this old farm-house. There were no children but us two, and we shared everything with each other; and there wasn't a stingy bone in Tabitha's body. She was one of the most

affectionate creatures in the world, and too kind-hearted to hurt anybody's feelings; and now to think I should live to see the day that she could say such words to me! I can't understand it, Matilda; I really cannot understand it.'

"'We can pray for her, Philemon, that her eyes may be opened,' said I; 'that will be our work for this one day.'

"'And for every day until the prayer is answered,' said Philemon; and his eyes were full of tears.

"And so time passed on; and one evening, as we were, as usual, sitting by the fire, Philemon reading, he laid down his paper and seemed in deep thought; and I knit away and said nothing.

"At length said he, 'Matilda.'

"Said I, 'Well?'

"'I have been thinking all day of some words in Sister Tabitha's letter; somehow I cannot get them out of my head.'

"'What were the words, Philemon?' said I.

"'She said she had more uses for her money than to throw it away upon people she knew nothing about, like the heathen. Now, Matilda, those words call to mind what I heard once of a man who was in a dark cell in prison, where he was almost forgotten, and nobody made an effort to get him out; and he knew nothing of the doings of the outside world, but just lived on in his dull, helpless way. At last a stranger came to visit the prison; he noticed the man, became interested in him, inquired into the affair, and found there was no reason why he should not be set at liberty to be of some use in the world. He told him so, and pointed out the way to get his liberty, and said he would help him. The prisoner got hopeful, knowing that there was at least one man in the world that wanted to help him live a useful life, and was praying for him; and so he grew encouraged, and at last he was free. Now, Matilda, that is just Sister Tabitha's case. She is in the prison of ignorance about the

heathen; yes, in prison, Matilda, chained hand and foot by her money, her diamonds, her fine clothes, her Saratoga and society, her carriage and horses; and it is our bounden duty to set her free, that she may be of some use in the world. So, Matilda, I want to try to forget all her harsh words to me. I want to write and tell her all these things; I want to write this very evening.

"I didn't say anything just then; we were both considering what was best for him to write.

"At last I said, 'Philemon.'

"Said he, 'Well?'

"'You have done enough for this one day to think of writing to her. But if you want to set her free, you must tell her more than you can put in a letter. Don't write until to-morrow evening, and I will see our president to-morrow and ask her for such reading as we ought to send to show her the way out of prison.'

"Philemon agreed with me; and I don't

think I ever passed a happier time than I did the next day while collecting. I got a lot of *Missionary Journals* and other papers with inspiriting things about mission work; and for tracts I had 'Mrs. Pickett's Missionary Box,' 'A Grain of Mustard-seed,' 'My Missionary Box and I,' and several others, topping out with 'Thanksgiving Ann.'

"'They are all good and freeing, Philemon,' said I, when he cast his eyes on what I had gathered; 'and "Thanksgiving Ann" will do her share toward bringing Sister Tabitha out of prison.'

"Well, we put them up in a neat package, wrote the letter, and sent all to the post-office that evening; that was our work for that day, and we waited to hear what would come of it.

"We waited and waited; and some people might have thought nothing would come of it; but Philemon and I felt quite sure Tabitha would write, if only to censure us for bothering her again. When we had almost begun to think we had offended her past forgiveness,

the letter came; and Philemon's first words when he finished reading it were:

"'He maketh the wrath of man to praise Him.'

"'What is it, Philemon?' said I.

"And then he read it aloud; and happy tears dimmed my eyes when I heard it.

"Sister Tabitha wrote that she was so sorry and ashamed that she ever wrote those cruel words to Philemon, her only brother, and the only near relative she had in the world. She said it was her deep sorrow for that which made her turn her thoughts to the subject so interesting to Philemon. But she knew no more about missions than did the poor heathen creatures that we were working for, and she was about to write and tell Philemon this, and to ask his pardon for her wicked words, which had cost her sleepless nights, when his letter and the papers and the blessed tracts came, and she thought she would wait until she had something to write about that would prove that she was trying

to help. So she had gone to see her pastor and his wife, and together they planned ways to use the money which Tabitha had pledged herself to set aside for missions each year; and when Philemon read the sum, we looked at each other across the table with happy tears.

"'When we are working for the Lord we need not trouble ourselves about the harvest,' said Philemon.

"More than that, Tabitha had called upon her rich acquaintances, and had encouraged them to give out of their abundance. And she stated that the talk with her pastor and his wife had opened her eyes to other duties; and she had taken a class in Sunday-school, and gathered in waifs of the great city, and clothed them suitably for their appearance there, and wonders that she could have left such a great duty undone; and she wound up her letter by saying:

"'Dear Philemon, like you and Sister Matilda, I am trying to live day by day, and find it good.'

"She had said she longed to come to see us and talk over these things, and Philemon and I wrote that evening and begged her to come; and I never saw Philemon so eager to see anybody as he is to see Sister Tabitha.

"There he comes up the path; I must go now. Come over, Dorcas, as soon as you can."

CHAPTER VI.

THE ATHELINGS AT QUAKER MISSIONARY MEETING.

"GOOD-EVENING, Dorcas. I came to Dorton for the mail, Philemon not feeling very well, and dropped in to tell you of our first visit to David and his wife since they went to live in the city.

"We went on Saturday, stayed three days, and had a lovely time, for they were so kind. And little Philemon is the prettiest and smartest child I know of, and they are all well and cheery.

"David's wife is a helpful, practical Christian, always watching out for ways to do good; and Philemon has begun to like Methodist ways, because she and David are such good people.

"Sunday morning we all went to the Methodist church where they belong, and in the afternoon to the Friends' Yearly Meeting —the reason of which I will explain further on—and in the evening to a church of our own denomination; and I must say we passed a happy day.

"The next morning Philemon and I went again to Yearly Meeting, and in the afternoon to the Quaker missionary meeting; and in the evening David's wife had visitors, of whom I must tell you when I have more time, for I never was more interested in strangers in my life.

"I was glad that Philemon saw so much of the Quakers, for it took some of the queer notions that he had out of his head; and only last evening he said, while we were sitting after supper reading, 'Matilda.'

"Said I, 'Well?'

"'I believe that God put it in David's heart to invite us while the Yearly Meeting and missionary meeting were going on, so

that I might be made ashamed of my narrow and stiff-necked notion that our denomination is the most favored of God. It isn't Christian-like to be so uncharitable, and I am ashamed that I have lived so long without knowing it.'

"You see, Dorcas, I didn't know that Philemon had such queer notions about the Quakers until that evening I came home from Joel Hollingsworth's and told him about Ethel asking me to put her name on the contributing list of our missionary society. I bore his reply in mind; and after supper that evening, when he laid down his paper and pared an apple, I thought it a good time to have him explain his meaning.

"So I said, 'Philemon.'

"Said he, 'Well?'

"'What did you mean when you said of Ethel Hollingsworth, "Quaker or no Quaker, that woman is a Christian"?'

"'Why,' answered Philemon, 'I meant what I said.'

"'Yes, but it sounded as if you thought that as a rule Quakers are not Christians.'

"'Well, who says they are?' said he. 'They think a moral life will take folks to heaven; do you call that being a Christian?'

"'Well, Philemon,' said I, 'it appears to me that folks haven't their title very clear for heaven unless they do lead a moral life.'

"'Yes, but that isn't all,' said Philemon, as he reached for another pippin. 'I heard once of a handsome, well-dressed man who was about to step upon an outbound steamer in the harbor of New York, when a detective went up to him, and laying his hand upon his shoulder, said:

"'"My friend, I wish you to come with me."

"'"What for?" said the man.

"'"You know what for," replied the detective.

"'The man did know, for he had escaped from the penitentiary after two years' imprisonment, when he had been sentenced for

ten, and had stayed out until collared by the detective that morning.

"'"Let me go and bid my wife and children good-by," said he.

"'"You can go, but I must go with you," said the detective.

"'So they went to an elegant home, and the wife and daughters were almost wild with grief over his capture, when they thought him safe from pursuit on the ocean.

"'"The best husband and father in the world," they moaned; "who could find evil in him?"

"'Yes, Matilda, he was a good husband and father, friend and neighbor; but that wasn't enough; the government wasn't satisfied with his goodness; he hadn't fulfilled its demands. Just so with the Quakers; they think a moral life is going to take them to heaven, so they depend on themselves and their own goodness.'

"'Have you ever heard a sermon from a Quaker preacher, Philemon?' said I.

"'Yes, I have; and he took no text, and I had to follow him all around Robin Hood's barn, as the saying is, to find out what he was driving at. But one thing I did understand, and that was that he didn't consider Christ anything more than a good man. That's heathenish.'

"'Now, Philemon,' said I, 'it's not fair to judge the whole lot by an imperfect sample. The Quakers are so liberal-minded in regard to the rights of their fellow-men that they allow anybody to rise up and speak in their meetings who thinks he has a call to do so; and sometimes things are said that are only that person's opinion, and not what they, as a society, believe.'

"'But, Matilda, they get married without the help of a minister of the gospel; that certainly isn't lawful.'

"'Yes, it is lawful, Philemon, and beautiful, and very, very solemn; but you were not brought up among Friends, and I suppose it does seem strange to you. The first Quaker

wedding I ever attended was that of a cousin of father's, the day I was six years old; and I remember it as though but yesterday.

"'Bride and groom were members, and were married upon one of the week-day meetings at our Friends' meeting-house. There was a deep snow upon the ground, and everybody came in sleighs. The great building was heated by tin-plate stoves, and the hickory-wood within them crackled and sparkled; and we children gathered about them, before taking our seats, to get thoroughly warmed, that we might wait with patience to see the wedding company come in, which seemed a long wait to us.'

"'I suppose they had passed meeting,' remarked Philemon, dryly—'passed, and forgot to come in.'

"'No, Philemon,' said I; 'what is meant by "passing" is that they had put their intention in writing, and placed it before the Monthly Meeting several weeks before that day, and it simply reads: "We, the subscri-

bers, purpose taking each other in marriage, which we hereby offer for the approbation of Friends." Their names are signed to the paper, and that is what is meant by "passing meeting."'

"'Well,' said Philemon, 'the wedding company are out in the cold all this time; hadn't you better bring them in?'

"'Yes,' continued I. 'After a little time we heard the jingle of sleigh-bells, and the hum of voices, and the subdued stir and flutter outside; then the measured tread of a number of people upon the porch which led to the entrance, and the door opened; and all eyes were turned to see the bride and groom, and their attendants—eight in all—enter and take seats which faced the whole meeting. You never saw any one sweeter-looking than the bride, and the bridesmaids were almost as lovely—all gowned in dove-colored silk, soft and rich, and white-satin bonnets. They sat there for what seemed to us children a long time, and there wasn't a sound in the house

except a gentle rustle now and then, and the singing of the wood in the stoves. Then the bride and groom arose; he took her hand in his and said, reverently:

"'"In the presence of the Lord, and before this assembly, I take Mary Harwood to be my wife, promising with the divine assistance to be unto her a loving and faithful husband until death shall separate us."'

"'Well, that is binding enough, I take it,' said Philemon; 'a man couldn't have much conscience that would break a vow which he made with God's help.'

"'No; and then Mary Harwood, in her sweet, gentle voice, said:

"'"In the presence of the Lord, and before this assembly, I take Robert Clement to be my husband, promising with the divine assistance to be unto him a loving and faithful wife until death shall separate us."'

"'But, Matilda,' said Philemon, 'there is nothing said about obeying in her promise.'

"'No, Philemon,' said I; 'there is no sect

which believes in perfect equality of the sexes more than Friends. If she promised to obey, so should he, for they are one.'

"'Well, it really seems solemn enough and lawful, and before plenty of witnesses, too.'

"'I should say so,' said I; 'for besides the twelve men and women Friends appointed by the meeting to be present, the whole neighborhood can go if they wish, and can put their names to the marriage certificate after it has been read to the assembly by a Friend appointed for the purpose, and after the bride and groom have recorded theirs. And then, Philemon, there is no denomination so particular in regard to marriage; for the couple must have the consent of their parents or guardians, and after they have passed meeting, two women-Friends visit the woman to see that she is free from engagement to any other man, and two men-Friends visit the man to see if he is free from all other engagements to women.'

"'But Quakers are queer, and you cannot

say they are not, Matilda; look at the men, keeping their hats on in God's house!'

"'But, Philemon, their reason for that is that they consider taking off the hat a token of reverence, and to be observed only in their solemn approaches to the Supreme Being, when exercising the religious duties of preaching and prayer. These are the very words they use in explaining that; and they also say that taking off their hats to express reverence to man is something their conscience will not allow them to do.'

"'Oh yes, their conscience!' said Philemon; 'they lay so much stress upon that, that one might think conscience was the only God they worship.'

"'Now, Philemon,' said I, 'listen one moment. Did you ever do wrong in your whole life that you didn't know at the time that it was wrong? And did you ever do right that you didn't know it was right? No, you did not, Philemon; I am sure of it; and the Friends are telling the exact truth when they

say that we all have an *inner light* or conscience within our hearts—a teacher ever near to point out the right and to counsel us to avoid the evil, if we will only heed its voice.'

"'Oh well, Matilda,' said he, in a discontented tone, 'why can't they do like other people? What's the use of their calling the days and months by numerals, and wearing such queer clothes, and objecting to tombstones in their graveyards?'

"'Why, Philemon,' said I, 'as far back as I can remember I heard a Quaker preacher explain two of your queries, and I never forgot it. He said the reason the Friends avoided the names generally given the days of the week and the months of the year was because those names were originally ascribed by way of honor to the idols of heathen. He said that in Exodus, twenty-third chapter and thirteenth verse, the Lord commanded the children of Israel to make no mention of the name of other gods, neither let it be heard

out of their mouths. He gave us an example by mentioning several, of which I remember only *January*, it being the month in which my birthday comes; and *June*, because all our crown-roses bloomed that month. He said January was so called from Janus, an ancient king of Italy, whom heathen superstition deified; and June from Juno, a heathen goddess; and the most plain and simple, as well as the most ancient, custom was to designate months and days by numerals.'

"'But,' remarked Philemon, after a long pause, 'that doesn't explain their reason for wearing such queer clothes.'

"'The reason is, Philemon, that they take the Bible for their guide in the matter of dress, as in everything else. One apostle tells us, "Be not conformed to this world;" and in another place, "I will that women adorn themselves in modest apparel;" and if Quaker clothes cannot be called modest apparel, I would like to see those that can.'

"Philemon said nothing to that, so I proceeded:

"'The apostle Peter is another guide to them when he says, "Whose adorning, let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel." So, Philemon, you see, it is because they don't wish to conform to vain and changeable fashions that they dress as they do; and there is many a society woman who is struggling to make a show on little money would be glad if she belonged to a society which wears a particular garb, for it saves a lot of money, and is the prettiest dress in the world.'

"'It is a wonder you are not a Quaker, seeing you are so partial to them,' remarked Philemon.

"'No, it's not intended that we should all belong to the same denomination; and I believe in baptism and the Lord's Supper, and several other things which the Friends think are forms only of man's invention. They

have a right to their belief, and I have a right to mine.'

"'You haven't said anything about the tombstones; have you forgotten about the one in the Friends' burial-ground that was taken up by some one as fast as the relatives set it in the ground?'

"'No, Philemon, I haven't forgotten it; but if you remember, that memorial wasn't exactly a tombstone; it was a monument, and it is against their rules to have anything more than a memorial stone large enough to hold the name and date of birth and death. Neither do they approve of costly coffins and funerals—not only for the reason that they object to what is not plain and simple, but they think it sets a wrong example to those not able to have them, but who strive to keep up with the others.'

"'Well,' said Philemon, after a long gaze into the fire, 'I don't care what you explain away, Matilda—the Quakers are queer. Just think of their not believing that Christ was

anything more than a good man. Of course it is no more than right for you to try to defend them, for you were raised in that denomination, and know them to be good, honest, peace-loving people; but, so far as I can see, they lack the one thing needful.'

"'No, Philemon, I wouldn't try to defend anybody that is morally wrong; but I love justice and charity; for, you know, without charity we are but sounding brass. God does not restrict us to this denomination and that, but looks at the heart.'

"'But He wants us to believe in Christ; and that the Quakers don't do, so far as I have ever heard.'

"Just at that minute who should come but our son David. We were rejoiced to see him, and while he and Philemon talked I set out a good little supper for him, which I must say he enjoyed. Well, we talked all the evening, and when we were about to retire, Philemon said:

"'Mother was uncommonly glad to see

you, David; she had about run out of excuses for the Quakers.'

"'Well, father,' laughed David, 'you and mother are coming up the last of the week to visit us, and it will be a first-rate time; for the Friends will be holding their Yearly Meeting, and you will hear for yourself what they believe.'

"So that is how we came to visit Yearly Meeting.

"People often say that I look and dress like a Friend, and I do, although not wearing the cute little sugar-scoop bonnet with plaited crown, but a drab-silk casing which I don't change for every new fashion that happens along.

"Well, as I mentioned before, Philemon and I went alone the second day of the meeting; and I wore my drab-silk dress and shawl to match, and Philemon the brown suit he wore to Missionburg. As we walked along and came in sight of the meeting-house, an idea came into my head.

"'Philemon,' said I.

"'Well?' said he.

"'We will stay in for the business meeting which the members always have after the public meeting is over; and if they should invite us to go out—which won't happen—we shall not be any worse off than if we didn't try to stay in.'

"Philemon didn't say anything, which was a sign that he was willing to stay; so we parted at the door, and I went in at the women's side of the house, and he went in at the men's.

"As good luck would have it, we got close together after all, for we were both at the end of benches next the partition; and I thought to myself, 'I am real glad of this, for if I wasn't here to encourage him he would get up and leave with the crowd the moment they commence to close the partition.'

"Well, the very first person that got up to preach was a small, delicate, sweet-faced woman; and out of the corner of my eye I

could see a curl come in Philemon's lip, and a look in his eyes which—I knew as well as if he had said it—meant, 'What *do* women go gadding about for, conceiting they can preach?'

"So I just sent up a little prayer: 'Dear Lord, there is a fellow-pilgrim here who don't believe in women preaching, and is all mixed up about the Quakers anyway. Put it into the power of that dear sister to enlighten his understanding, and to convince him that they are Thy servants, and obey Thy voice as well as we; for Thy name's sake. Amen.'

"It seemed that as the words arose from my heart, room was left for the sweetest peace and belief that the Lord would attend to that matter, and I need have no more concern about it. So I just listened to that sermon, while tears of joy filled my eyes to know that Philemon was so absorbed that he hadn't ears nor eyes for anything else; and the curl went from his lip as the words of that angel woman flowed smooth and swift and strong as the current of a calm but mighty river

that was, in its quiet way, forcing before it all obstructions. She took up nearly all of the public meeting; and no one was sorry, for such a solemn hush as pervaded that great assembly I never knew; and when she finished there was a general stir, as if, after having been to the very gates of heaven, they had suddenly found themselves back upon the earth.

"Two men-preachers followed with a few strong words corroborating her testimony for Christ; then the partition glided down upon its cords, and the last glimpse I had of Philemon he was firm in his seat, and I sent up a little prayer of thanksgiving.

"There were things of great interest in the business meeting—wise plans for the Sunday-schools and other needs for the young people of the Society; plans for helping the poor at our doors, and the distant Indians; and what pleased me also was that they were to have a missionary meeting in the afternoon, and everybody was invited.

"On our way back to David's I said, 'Philemon.'

"Said he, 'Well?'

"'Let us go to Quaker missionary meeting this afternoon; I might hear something that would be of use in our society.'

"Philemon was agreeable, and we went and heard lots of ways for carrying on the work, and were both so deeply interested that we were sorry when it was over.

"I passed out with the crowd, and was sitting upon a bench which was set against the meeting-house, waiting for Philemon, when who should come by but the dear sister who had preached in the morning, and she stopped to press my hand.

"'I saw thee in our business meeting this morning,' said she, in her sweet, gentle voice; 'I judge thee is a member of our Society.'

"'No, but I was raised a Friend,' said I, 'and it seems very good and pleasant to be with them again.'

"'I suppose thee was disowned for marry-

ing out of our Society?' said she, questioningly.

"'No,' said I, 'but my father was, which amounts to about the same thing.'

"'I hope thee is happy in the church of thy choice,' said she; 'we can all be Christians, even if certain forms distinguish one denomination from another. I was glad to see thee in our missionary meeting, and hope thee was pleased with the plans we are taking for the advancement of the kingdom.'

"'I was indeed,' replied I, 'and am glad we had the chance to be at your meetings, for I wanted my husband to see the good you are doing in the world. You see he came of a family of stiff church people from way back, and he had never been to a Friends' meeting like this, and knows nothing about Friends; and I am real glad he came to hear what you really believe. He is a first-rate man in his own church, but thinks—or did think until our son David married a Methodist—that his church is the only one.'

"'Well,' said she, gently, 'I hope we satisfied him.'

"'Yes, he could not help seeing that you are not only doing all you can for the poor abused Indian creatures, but also for the far-away heathen. And I was more than glad that he heard for himself that you believe that Christ was more than a good man.'

"Just at that minute Philemon came around the corner of the meeting-house looking for me, and I beckoned to him to come, and introduced him to the preacher; for the woman who sat next to me in the business meeting had told me her name.

"'I am truly glad to see thee, Friend Philemon,' said she, shaking hands with him, 'and I hope thy prejudices are removed.'

"'Yes,' said Philemon; 'I have lived nearly fifty years in the world, and didn't know until to-day what the Quakers did believe.'

"'Well, Friend Philemon,' said she, as sweet and gentle as an angel, 'thee cannot accuse us of trying to keep any one in ig-

norance of our belief; we make no secret of it.'

"'But I have always heard,' said Philemon, 'that you don't take the Bible as your rule of faith and practice.'

"'I can only reply to that objection, Friend Philemon,' said she, 'by quoting the exact words of our Discipline, or, as thee would name it, "Creed": "The Holy Scriptures being the external means of preserving and conveying to us an account of things most surely believed concerning the coming of Christ our Lord in the flesh, and the fulfilling of the promises relating thereto, it is the earnest concern of the Yearly Meeting to press upon Friends a diligent acquaintance with the sacred records, and that parents and heads of families would, both by example and advice, impress upon the susceptible minds of the youth a reverent esteem for the doctrines and precepts of the Christian religion contained therein, inducing them to believe that the same experience of the work of sanctifica-

tion through the operations of the Spirit of God to which the Holy Scriptures abundantly bear testimony has been, and is to be, witnessed by believers in all generations. Our dear youth, thus educated in the belief of these important truths, may be prepared to receive the spiritual appearance of God in their hearts, according to our holy profession." Does that sound to thee, Friend Philemon, as if we did not believe in the Scriptures?'

"'No,' said Philemon, 'it certainly doesn't; but I have always heard and believed that the Quakers don't believe in the divinity of Christ, and really looked upon them as first cousins to heathens.'

"Well, my heart almost stood still, and my face blazed like a coal of fire, to hear Philemon speak in this way to that angelic little creature. But the only effect his words seemed to have upon her was an anxious concern that I should not feel hurt for her at his uncouth speech. She laid her white hand on

my arm while she replied to him in her sweet, gentle tone; for she knew he meant no harm, but was only, as an earnest, God-fearing man, seeking the truth.

"'In order to convince thee, Friend Philemon, that we do believe in the divinity of Christ, I will again quote from our Discipline, giving thee the exact words upon the subject, which are: "If any in membership with us shall deny the divinity of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, the immediate revelation of the Holy Spirit, or the authenticity of the Scriptures, it will thereby be manifest that they are not one in faith with us. If any shall blaspheme or speak profanely of Almighty God, Christ Jesus, or the Holy Spirit, they should be timely and earnestly treated with, for the convincement of their understanding, that they may experience repentance and forgiveness. But should they, notwithstanding such brotherly love, persist in their error, the Monthly Meeting to which they belong ought to declare the same,

and issue its testimony accordingly." Now, Friend Philemon, does that look as if we denied the divinity of Christ?'

"'It certainly doesn't,' said Philemon, 'and I can't see what call people have for saying that Quakers believe a moral life is all anybody needs to get into heaven; for I never knew that you depended on anything else.'

"'Dear friend,' said she, gently, 'if we looked on Christ as only a perfect example for living here upon earth, could we be as happy in our faith as we are? Suppose there was a poor man in our penitentiary under sentence of death for murder, and a person should go to him and say, "Friend, our governor is a great and good man; morally and intellectually he is an example worthy of being followed." No doubt the prisoner would agree to all this, knowing it to be true; but would that satisfy his needs? No, it would not. But should the person say, "Friend, the governor is a great and good man, and has sent you the pardon you asked for,"

would not that convey a happier meaning than any other message? Well, that is just the light in which we Friends view Christ. He is not only a perfect example for daily living, but also a Saviour, able and willing to save all who come to Him.'

"'But the Hicksites don't believe in the divinity of Christ,' said Philemon; 'it's only the Orthodox, so I have been told.'

"'This is a Hicksite meeting, Friend Philemon, and the Book of Discipline from which I have quoted is that of the Hicksites. Did thee hear anything that leads to that belief?'

"'No, I certainly did not,' said Philemon; 'but if they believe all these things, why did they split from the Orthodox?'

"'Only because of personal animosity among a few of the members at first, and which, like all strife, broadened and strengthened. A wrong construction was put upon things said by Elias Hicks, and for long years was believed. But that gentle healer, Time, has explained away the erroneous things said

of him, and while the two branches are one in the main questions of faith and practice, the Hicksites having received the name, given them by the Orthodox, retain it.'

"'It is queer there isn't more said about their belief in print,' said Philemon, hanging on to his objections as if he loved them so he couldn't bear to let them go.

"'Does thee never see our Friends' magazines and newspapers and other periodicals, Friend Philemon? It is not the fault of the Society if other denominations do not take enough interest in us to know what our belief is. I can assure thee that we take interest in others, and see that while there is some difference in the *form* of worship, there is no essential difference in belief, and rejoice that all who are worthy shall dwell in heaven, no matter what the name may be of their denomination upon earth.'

"'I wish I had all this down in black and white,' said Philemon, looking away from her to the sea of faces that surrounded the meet-

ing-house; 'some of our church people would open their eyes to read for themselves that Quakers had any other thought than peace on earth and good will to men, and a good living in this world.'

"The loveliest tinge of rose came into that dear little creature's face, and she smiled as she said, cheerily:

"'Well, Friend Philemon, providing for ourselves and families is a duty enjoined upon us, and a moderate enjoyment of the good things of this life will not keep us out of heaven. But if thee desires to see our belief "down in black and white," as thee says, thee need only consult a book called "Cockburn's Review," and another called "The Portraiture of Quakerism," by Thomas Clarkson, both to be found in any public library of the Friends' Society.'

"'I have always thought that Hicksites believed that all that was needed to get into heaven was a moral life on earth,' said Philemon, doggedly.

"'And thee heard aright, friend. A moral life is necessary; but to live that good, moral life one must take Christ as his personal Saviour, a guide in all things; must obey His teachings, and follow them. Yes, friend, a good life *is* necessary; but one cannot live a good life out of Christ. Does thee think it possible? Does thee imagine *we* think it possible?'

"Well, I never saw Philemon in such a fix before that he couldn't say something; but that time he was completely wound up or run down, and he turned to me, and said he:

"'Matilda, won't David's wife wonder what has become of us?'

"'Maybe she will,' said I.

And then that dear little woman gave her hand to Philemon and kissed me in farewell, and said she:

"'Dear friends, we are of one belief after all; and when the angel of death, with wings fragrant from the odors of heavenly gardens, comes and takes us home, we will not be con-

cerning ourselves with the little differences of creed and garb and speech, but will rejoice together in the smile of Him who died that we might live.'

"So we went back to David's and took supper, and then came home. And while sitting by our evening lamp I noticed that Philemon had lowered his paper and was in deep thought. After a time said he, 'Matilda.'

"Said I, 'Well?'

"'I don't know what to think of myself,' said he. 'I used to be firm and settled in my conviction that our church was the only one that has the favor of God; but of late I have become shaky in that opinion. First I gave in to the Methodists because of the goodness of David's wife; then the words in "Silent Times" let me see that Presbyterians were on the right road; then I took to the Lutherans because of our neighbor, who is indeed a father in Israel; then Baptist, Episcopal, and Congregational church papers sent me by David made me see that their doctrine was

sound; and now I have taken in the Quakers. I don't know what to call such a shackling change of opinion, Matilda; I really don't.'

"'Call it growing in grace, Philemon,' said I, tenderly; 'call it growing in grace, and you will be giving it the true and lawful name.'"

CHAPTER VII.

MRS. ATHELING AS A HOME MISSIONARY.

"WHY, Dorcas, how do you do! I am really glad to see you, and glad that our church picnic happened upon Saturday, allowing you to be with us, for it is such a splendid day to be in the woods.

"Let us sit under the shade of that great oak and talk while the people are coming. Dear me! doesn't it seem strange that we elderly people have come to a picnic in the very woods where we played as children? Yes, we ran miles through these woods, playing 'hide-and-go-seek' and 'prisoners' base'; and at the foot of this very oak we went through the pleasures and bothers of housekeeping, with bits of broken china and an old broom.

"But what I wish to tell you is something which has pleased me more than anything which has happened for some time. David's wife told me of it when she was down, and there has been a feeling of thankfulness in my heart ever since. Yes, she came and brought little Philemon; and in the evening David came, and all stayed over Sunday, and we had a good time together. It was on Saturday evening, after Philemon and David had gone to a church council and little Philemon was in bed, that she told me the result of a little bit of home mission work which I did while Philemon and I were visiting her, and which I never for a minute thought would lead to so much. And it bids fair to lead to a great deal more; in fact, no one on earth can tell the result of what we smiled at as a trifle.

"You see, when Philemon and I went to visit David and his wife, I was a little downhearted over my want of success as a worker for missions—particularly for home missions—and I'll tell you why.

"At the last meeting of our society each member was given a place to call to ask for a contribution for beneficial work and home missions, the particular necessity at that time being the help of a poor set of creatures named Bennett who lived down by the mill. They had been burned out of house and home, and Bennett had been hurt by a log falling on him while he was trying to save their bit of furniture, so that he wasn't able to work. The mother, who was a poor nervous creature, shook to death with the ague; and there was a whole raft of children of all sizes, like a paper of assorted needles; and none of them had a stitch of clothes except what they went to sleep in the night of the fire.

"So we planned to collect all the clothes we could, which would save buying new, and to give what money was contributed for other things needed; and as ill luck would have it, my place was Zedekiah Granger's.

"Now you know Zed Granger as well as I

do; you know that he is not only well off as to money, but is the narrowest-minded and stingiest and most grasping creature in the whole neighborhood. I know the Bible says we must have charity of speech as well as of deed, and that charity is kind and thinketh no evil, and I believe it; but when the whole neighborhood is pulling in one direction, and in the direction of truth into the bargain, it isn't worth while for me to be pulling the other way by praising Zed Granger for good deeds he don't do and for good traits he hasn't got.

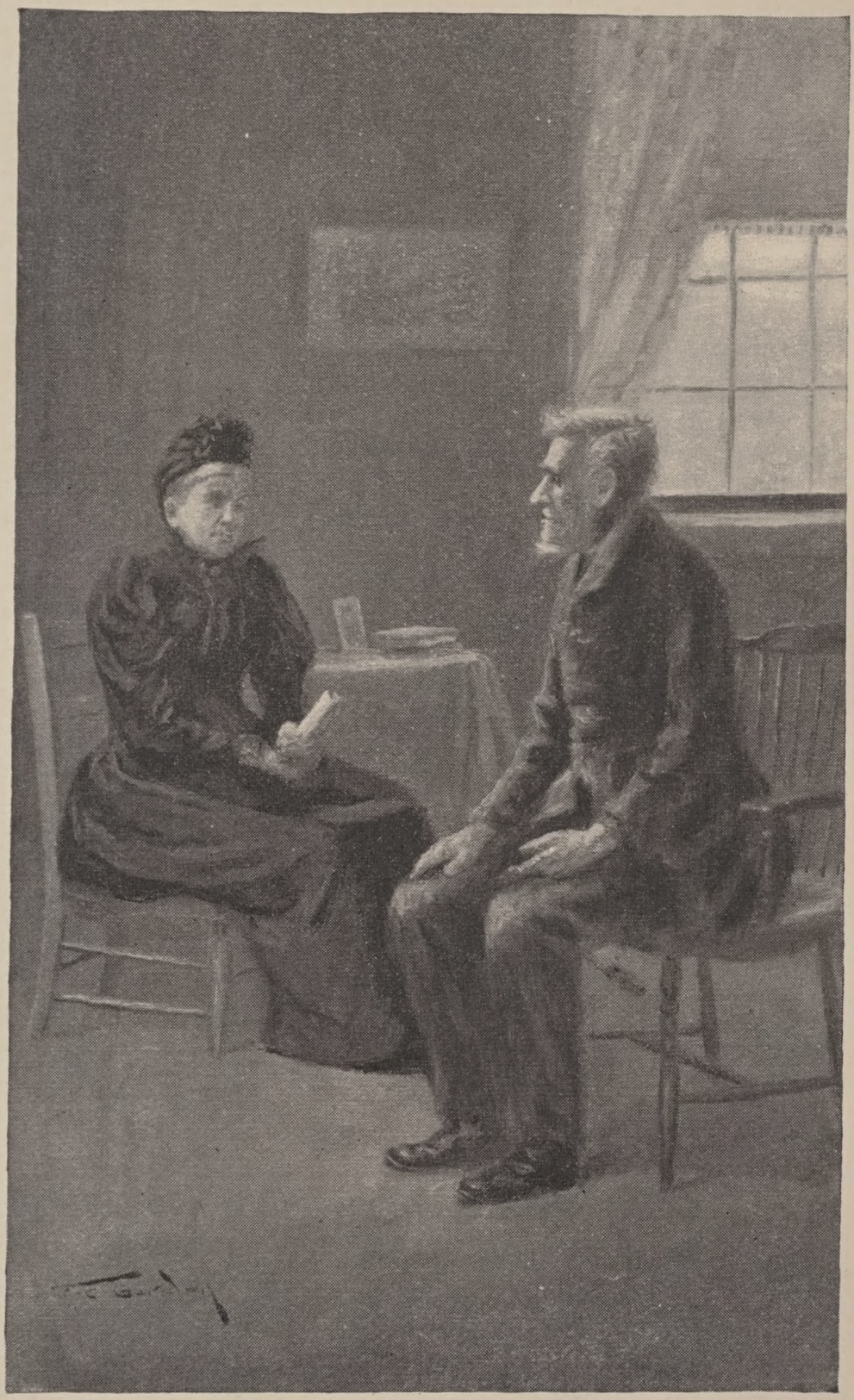
"We all knew that the Granger children wouldn't have any cast-off clothes, for Zed never allows Mrs. Granger any money for new ones until the children are in tatters, although he has a good farm and makes it pay, and has money out at interest besides. But Mrs. Benson said maybe I could soften his heart by telling him of the sufferings of the poor Bennetts, and maybe he would give money. I guess she mistrusted it wasn't easy to soften what wasn't there, for she

only appointed that one place for me, while the others had two.

"Well, I went, although I didn't count upon anything but sneering remarks; and poor Mrs. Granger came to let me in, looking, as she always does, half starved; and so she is, for rest and appreciation and generous living. I told her I wished to see Mr. Granger, and she said she would tell him. Well, Zed came in, and the minute he set eyes on my subscription paper he froze right up, and looked as grim as the old tyrant he is; and you can't go any further than that, Dorcas.

"'Well, Mr. Granger,' said I, in persuasive tones, 'I reckon you have heard of those poor creatures down by the mill who were burned out, and have no home, food, nor clothing.'

"'Yes,' said he, 'and I have just been saying it is exactly what such careless wretches deserve. They go to bed leaving an old wooden fireboard up with a bushel of soot behind it, which of course gets afire; and the owner loses the house, and the neighbors are



MRS. ATHELING AND MR. GRANGER. (Page 142.)

expected to give them better clothes than they had before. It is their own fault that they have lost the little they had.'

"'Yes,' said I, calm-like, 'I reckon they know that, and it does not make their loss any easier to bear. They were poor as poverty before the fire, and when Bennett was working; now he is hurt from something falling upon his foot during the time, and has to walk on crutches; if somebody don't fall to and help, they will starve.'

"'Well,' said he, 'let them starve; there are too many of them, anyway, and the neighborhood would be glad to spare them.'

"'There are some other folks the neighborhood could spare,' said I, looking searchingly at him; 'leastways, they are no use to it.'

"'You are right,' said he, putting on the sneeringest look you ever saw; 'and the ones that can be spared best are the women who go gadding about attending to other people's business to the neglect of their own. I don't know how Philemon Atheling may consider it,

but I would rather my wife would sit at home darning stockings.'

"Well, I didn't make any reply to that, for I knew the small, stingy creature only said it to keep from giving anything, though poor Bennett had done some hard days' work on his farm, and had been ground down to the last cent of wages; for you know Bennett just did a day's work wherever he could get it, and Zed Granger is sometimes compelled to hire work done.

"'Don't you ever give anything to help people who are in trouble?' said I.

"'No, I don't,' said he; 'I let folks look out for themselves; it isn't my fault that Bennett and his children are half starved, neither is it my fault that he got hurt and can't work. No, I don't give a red cent to such careless wretches; I never did, and I never will.'

"'Well,' said I, 'that is what the whole neighborhood says of you, but I thought it might be worth while to try. Do you count on going to heaven with that way of doing?'

"'I reckon so,' said he, looking as hard-favored as one of those ugly figures on an old Dutch pipe; 'the dying thief never gave anything to help his neighbors as ever I heard of, and he went straight to Paradise.'

"'And don't you give anything to the church to help the spread of the gospel?'

"'No, I don't; the dying thief never gave anything to the church that I ever heard of; I am just like him.'

"'And don't you give anything to convert the heathen,' said I—'those poor creatures that have souls as well as we?'

"'No,' said he, 'I don't give a farthing, and don't intend to. I get all I can, and don't care who loses by it, and keep all I get. Look at the dying thief; he didn't give anything to the heathen that I ever heard of, yet he went to Paradise; I am just like him.'

"'No, you are not, Zed Granger,' said I, as I rose to leave; 'you are not like him, and the difference is that he was a dying thief and you are a living one.'

"You see, Dorcas, I was not the one to ask Zed Granger for money; it ought to have been somebody who didn't know so much about him, and would not have lost her temper and cast any of his meannesses up to him. The particular meanness I had in my mind at that minute was his borrowing eighty dollars from Simeon Petticord—Sarah's husband—and giving his note payable at a specified date. Well, Simeon being honest himself, and Zed being a well-to-do neighbor, and more than all, Simeon not knowing him as well as most of us do, he let it run out of date, and Zed refused to pay it. He said if people did not attend to their own business they could not expect other people to do it for them.

"I knew that what I said was true, yet I was a little scared. The words seemed to say themselves, and I believe it was intended that they should be said. I expected an outbreak of temper from Zed; instead, he smiled one of his grim smiles and let me pass out without a word. And I realized that I wasn't a success

at collecting for home missions; so when David's wife told me the result, so far, of one of my attempts at it, I just raised my eyes in thankfulness and said, 'Praise God, from whom all blessings flow.'

"To begin at the beginning, I must tell you that directly back of David's house there is an alley, and in one of the old houses a man named Hale and his fourteen-year-old daughter Gerty had two rooms on the first floor.

"The father was a tall, pale, downhearted-looking man, who just managed to live by doing the odd jobs he could get. They hadn't lived there but a few months, and the mother had died a little while after they came.

"David's wife had seen her once, and said she was a ladylike little creature, that looked as if she had never known till then what hard times were; and David said that that family had a history as sure as his name was David Atheling, and he was certain that such people were not at home in an alley.

"Hale was as handsome as a picture, and David's wife said he always made her think of representations of martyrs which she had seen in cathedrals. After his wife died he didn't seem to care to live, and they got poorer and poorer, until neither he nor Gerty looked as if they had enough to eat, and were very shabby and wretched.

"David's wife helped Gerty all she could, and the child came often and never went away empty-handed.

"Well, the Monday we were going to Friends' Yearly Meeting, Philemon had gone down to the store with David just for the walk, and was to come back in time to go to meeting, and David's wife was busy upstairs. I was in the parlor reading, when I heard a tap at the dining-room door, and when I opened it there stood Gerty.

"'This is little Philemon's birthday,' said she, 'and I brought him my kitten as a present.'

"David's wife came in just then, and was

pleased to have the kitten—though not one of those foolish, if not sinful, mothers who allow their little ones to worry the lives out of these helpless dumb creatures—and said she:

"'Gerty, it is very kind of you, but it is the only pet you have; are you sure you are willing to part with it?'

"'Yes,' replied Gerty, her beautiful brown eyes full of tears; 'for you are so good to me, and I have nothing else to give.'

"'Well,' said David's wife, 'you can sit here and talk to grandma while I get some of little Philemon's birthday-cake for you.'

"So while she got a basket, and put in it bread, tea, meat, butter, a cup of jelly, and the cake, I told Gerty what I had been reading of child-life in heathen countries, and many other things I had read and heard; and I never saw anybody take more interest than she did.

"'Now, Gerty,' said David's wife, as the child rose to go, 'I have put a few things in this basket, but wish to make you a little

present besides, because you were so kind as to remember my boy's birthday; what do you need the most?'

"Gerty didn't say anything for some time; she was considering.

"'I guess I will go home and think it over,' said she, 'and come back and tell you.'

"In the meantime I had been thinking what I could give her, and went up to my room and brought down a set of fine cambric ruffles; and I never saw anybody so delighted. She wouldn't touch them with her hands—which I must say weren't as clean as possible—but asked me to wrap them in paper for her, which I did, and she ran through the yard and alley-gate to her home.

"'Well, mother,' laughed David's wife as soon as Gerty was beyond hearing-distance, 'I could scarcely keep from smiling when I saw you giving her those dainty frills, for I thought to myself if you could see the inside of their house you would know that they were going where they would be strangers and out

of place and lonely. But who would imagine that Gerty would be so pleased?'

"'Yes, she was,' said I, 'for there is no accounting for children. One Christmas I had not provided a present for David, and was real vexed thinking of his disappointment, when the thought struck me of a bright new tin pan which he had not seen, and I put it beside his crib, where he could see it the minute he awoke. Well, nothing I could have bought would have pleased him more; for he hunted a stick and made a drum out of the pan, which I let him beat to his heart's content.'

"Well, as I was saying, Gerty ran home; and after eating until she was satisfied of the things David's wife had given her, she put the rest aside for her father, and then sat down to consider what she needed most, while gazing at the ruffles in the paper. At length a bright idea came to her; she darted out and ran through David's gate and knocked.

"'I think,' said she, almost out of breath, 'that what I need most is a piece of soap.'

"We couldn't keep from laughing at that, for she certainly did need it; and Gerty laughed too, as David's wife gave her a bar of brown soap and a cake of sweet-scented toilet-soap; and too happy to speak, she ran home, and afterward told David's wife all she had done.

"First she took off her calico dress—the only one she had; then she put on an old sack of her mother's, stuffed a bit of rag in the leaky tin wash-basin, and gave her dress a thorough washing and spread it in the sun to dry. Then she went to the floor above and took care of the poor hurried tailor-woman's baby for the use of a hot iron and needle and thread.

"She played with the iittle one until it dropped asleep, then ironed her dress, put the ruffles in the neck and sleeves, and was about to put it on a chair when a new thought struck her.

"'Dear, dear! I can never think of putting

these ruffles on such a chair as that,' thought she. So, taking the dress into the next room, she took the borrowed articles home, came back, and scrubbed the old chair for the first time in her life. The contrast between it and the others was so great that she kept on until the other chair, stool, and rickety table were scoured as white as hands could make them.

"'The whole room needs cleaning,' thought she, gazing at the bleared windows and smutty floor. 'I can't put on my clean ruffles in such a place as this. I will clean it, and never, never let it look so again.'

"David's wife said the ruffles had proved a tree of knowledge: through them Gerty realized the responsibilities of a housekeeper; and such a cleansing as the room got that day it had not known since the Hales took possession. It looked so clean and bare that one could not help thinking it stood the chance of taking cold from having the thick coat which Father Time had provided removed so suddenly.

"Fresh from her toilet-soap bath, Gerty brushed and plaited her beautiful hair, and donned her dress. With great care she arranged the viands given her upon the clean table while the tiny fire was boiling the water for tea.

"Her father came languidly in, and they took their places, Gerty feeling more comfortable than she had done since living without a mother's care.

"After a time the unkempt object opposite her took her attention from the ruffles which made her hands appear white and small, and she spoke her thoughts:

"'Pap, you look very dirty!'

"'I know it,' replied Hale, reddening; 'sometimes I think that is the reason I cannot get employment. Business men don't want even a porter as shabby as I am; but I cannot help myself, I am entirely discouraged.'

"'Papa,' said the little woman, 'you don't know how much better people feel when they are clean. After supper I will take off my

dress and new ruffles and put on my old sack, and heat some water real hot, and you and I will wash your clothes. You can put on any old rags after dark, and your clothes will be nearly dry by morning, and the sun will finish them. Will you, papa?'

"Hale did not enter into the scheme with the same spirit as the girl, but agreed; so Gerty borrowed a tub and rope, and soon the once fine and black, but now soiled and rusty, suit was hanging to dry.

"The next morning the garments were of the right dampness to iron; then Gerty placed them in the sun, while Hale, in his closet room, was, with the help of the toilet-soap, enjoying the luxury of a thorough bath. He had sold his razor weeks before for bread; but the faithful neighbor above-stairs loaned a pair of scissors, and Gerty trimmed his hair, whiskers, and mustache, his shoes were blacked with soot, and he was ready to set out again upon his wanderings in search of work.

"'You look just elegant, papa,' said Gerty,

throwing her arms about his neck and kissing him; 'you are the handsomest man I know; any rich girl would be proud to have you for a father.'

"With this praise poor Hale went, not comforted nor cheered—for he was too ill fed and discouraged for that—but not so entirely hopeless as he was the evening before.

"Toward night he came home, bringing with him a juicy beefsteak, coffee, and many other substantial things for supper, and put a bright silver dollar into the hand of the bewildered Gerty.

"'I got a position in the very first store I called at this morning,' said he. 'The clerks were talking of the sudden and fatal illness of the bookkeeper, and I asked to see the owner and was shown to his office. Without stopping a moment to consider, I asked for a position as bookkeeper; he asked for a reference, and I gave the name of a gentleman he knew; I waited until he wrote a note to him and got a reply. He engaged me

directly at the same salary he had given the former bookkeeper; I went to the desk, and have been there all day. I don't know what put it into his heart to call me back and put two dollars into my hand, but he did; and may God bless him for his thoughtfulness as he deserves to be blessed.'

"Well, Dorcas, that very evening Hale came to see David and his wife, and told them the good news, and asked if they would take Gerty to board, that she might go to a good school, and be under the care of a kind, good woman for whom Gerty had great affection—for she almost adores David's wife.

"They said she might come, and Hale's first month's salary bought them both new clothes; and Gerty is in one of the best schools, learning wonderfully fast, and goes to church and Sunday-school, and is sweet and amiable and pretty as any girl there. David's wife says that she often speaks of what I told her about the heathen, and has made up her mind to go as a missionary

when she is older and has a good education; and David's wife knows that she means it.

"Gerty says that my gift of the dainty little ruffles was the start of it all; and I cannot help but wonder that such small events in this life often lead to great results, encouraging one to watch day by day for chances to help our fellow-pilgrims.

"Dorcas, just look at the people coming to the picnic! I am so glad we came early enough to have this good talk."

CHAPTER VIII.

SARAH PETTICORD COLLECTS FOR MISSIONS.

"WELL, Dorcas Littlefield! Of all the people I know, I didn't expect you would be at camp-meeting to-day, for I heard you hadn't gotten back from your vacation journey. I am real glad to see you; and now that morning preaching is over and people have gone to their tents and carriages for dinner, we can sit right here under this shade and talk, for I wanted to tell you about our missionary meeting in general, and about Sarah Petticord collecting for home missions in particular.

"You see, Sister Slocum's niece—or, what is more correct, her late husband's niece—Serena Slocum, married a missionary, and went several years ago out to Nebraska,

where they are doing good work teaching and Christianizing the Indians.

"Sister Slocum kept hearing of them time and again, and they were getting along very well; then for a long time she didn't hear anything till a few weeks ago, when news came to her that Serena and the children were down with scarlet fever, and they were as poor as poor could be, and in need of help.

"Sister Slocum is as generous a creature as ever lived, and was as willing to help Serena as if she was her own daughter; but you know she has a large family of her own, and, being a widow, has much care, and her heart ached because she couldn't send Serena money in her great need; but as she couldn't she did the next best thing, which was to report the case to the missionary society.

"Well, the president called a meeting, for the case was urgent; and we all gave what we could, and then a committee was appointed to go out collecting.

"We were all willing to go, and in the

general talk and canvassing of places where it was considered best to go, I happened to say that I didn't care where I went so it wasn't to Zed Granger's.

"'Sure enough,' said the president, 'we have forgotten him, and he is so well able to give.'

"'Yes,' said I, 'that is a fact; he is well able; but between that and being willing is a considerable stretch.'

"'Don't you consider it worth while to call upon him, Sister Atheling?' said she, looking inquiringly at me.

"'No,' said I, 'I don't think it is, as I calculate that the whole result would be that those who went would wish they hadn't.'

"'Perhaps Sister Petticord will go,' said she, turning to Sarah. 'It is indeed a worthy object, and as the missionary and his wife are in a manner known to Mr. Granger, it is to be hoped that he will contribute.'

"We all glanced at Sarah, who sat there, fair and serene, and saying nothing; and nobody but I who know her so well would

have suspected that she had heard a word of it. And just then somebody mentioned another place that had been overlooked, and Zed Granger was forgotten by all but Sarah, who, as it appeared afterward, had made up her mind to get money out of Zed Granger for home missions, or perish in the attempt.

"Well, we adjourned with the understanding that we would all go collecting that evening and next morning, then have a meeting in the afternoon to report what we had done.

"I thought I had done well, and I believe all the members thought that of themselves, until the meeting the next afternoon, when in walked Sarah Petticord and laid one hundred and twenty-five dollars upon the table.

"'Fifty of it,' said she, 'is from Philip Starkey, and seventy-five from Zedekiah Granger.' And then she went and took her seat as unconcerned as if, to my bewildered understanding, the ceiling wasn't coming down to meet the floor and the floor going up to meet the ceiling.

"Yes, Dorcas Littlefield, I just sat and stared at Sarah Petticord, who had laid that money down and read it off as composedly as if it wasn't anything out of the order of things for Zed Granger to be giving seventy-five dollars for every object that happened along.

"I wasn't the only one that was taken completely by surprise, and I could see that the president and every member there was hoping that Sarah would explain; but that is not her way, and they all had to leave without knowing.

"'Well,' thought I to myself, 'you may be as silent as you please, Sarah, but as sure as my name is Matilda Atheling, I am going to find out what softened the spot where Zed Granger's heart ought to be, to make him give seventy-five dollars for home missions.'

"You know I have a firm belief that Providence helps those who help themselves; so while the others were talking over the best way to send the money, the thought came to

me that Sarah Petticord was a great friend of Sister Slocum's, and if she had told anybody how she succeeded in getting that money, she had told her. So I resolved to walk home with Sister Slocum; for it wasn't much out of my way—at least, not enough to make her suspect that I had a motive.

"Well, we talked all the way there about the wonderful success we had, and that of Sister Petticord in particular; but she didn't say a word about how Sarah managed, and I couldn't get my own consent to ask, but adopted Sarah Petticord's plan of keeping silent unless there was a point to be gained by talking. So we chatted of this, that, and the other until we reached her door; and as I was no nearer knowing than when we started, I accepted her invitation to go in and rest.

"So I took one rocking-chair, and she took another; and every now and again I would hint at Sarah Petticord's usefulness in the missionary society, and what a good hand she

was at collecting clothes, and how liberal she was with her time and money, and mentioned that I hadn't been very successful in collecting cash for the Nebraska missionary's family, but had the promise of clothing for the box which was to follow the money; but Sarah seemed particularly successful in getting contributions in cash.

"But it was all of no use; Sister Slocum agreed with everything I said, and added scraps of information of Sarah's usefulness that I hadn't heard; and time was passing and I must go home, the chance being that my extra walk was without result; so I resolved to make a bold move.

"'Law, Sister Slocum,' said I, commencing to tie my bonnet-strings, 'do you ever call to see Mrs. Granger? I often think she leads a dull life, seeing nobody and going nowhere, and tyrannized over by that grim old fossil, Zed Granger.'

"'Now, Sister Atheling,' said Sister Slocum, laughing till her face was as red as my new

table-cover, 'just stop eddying and circling about that subject, but come right to the point and ask how Sarah Petticord got that seventy-five dollars out of Zedekiah Granger; for I know you are terribly anxious to hear.'

"I was a good deal taken aback, but was so proud of my smartness in judging that Sister Slocum was the one to apply to that I said, boldly:

"'Yes, I am more than terribly anxious to hear, and, if I am not mistaken, the whole missionary society is in the same fix, for it certainly must have been done by some magic or other.'

"'No,' said she, 'there is no magic about it, and Sarah Petticord did not tell me not to mention it; at the same time, no one would have gotten to know it if I had not been with her and heard it all. And, Matilda Atheling, it was as entertaining as a play. Sarah Petticord was intended for a lawyer or a detective, or some other shrewd creature, and fairly outwitted Zed Granger, although he thinks he is

the smartest person in the neighborhood. But his Greek and Latin didn't help him in that case, and school-teacher as he was once, he couldn't figure out how to keep from paying the seventy-five dollars he promised, particularly as I was a witness of the whole affair.'

"'Yes,' said I, 'Sarah Petticord is one of the shrewdest persons I ever knew, and Zed Granger is full of his mineralogy and geology and all the other ologies under the sun; but the one he has learned the best is how to hold on to his money; and what induced him to part with seventy-five dollars for home missions is what I want to know.'

"'Well, Sister Atheling,' said she, 'untie your bonnet-strings again and make yourself comfortable, and I will tell you the whole story.

"'Last evening, after our supper was over, and I was sitting here knitting, Sarah Petticord came in, with a basket in her hand, and said she:

"'"Sister Slocum, I am going down to pass the evening with Mrs. Granger, and want you to go with me. I heard she wasn't well, and we will try to cheer her by talking over our school-days. To be sure she wasn't one of us, but Zed was, and she may take interest on that account. They have been wanting some of my Cochin eggs, but Zed was too stingy to buy them, so I concluded to give them to Mrs. Granger. Here are thirteen beauties, which will hatch out as many Cochins if the hen they give them to does her duty by them."

"'So, Matilda, I put on my wraps and rolled up my knitting, and we walked down the road and were soon knocking at the Grangers' front door.

"'Well, Sarah knocked and I knocked, and then Sarah knocked again; but there wasn't a sign nor sound of anybody coming to let us in. The tops of the graveyard-looking evergreens which are all around the house and down each side of the front path clear to the gate were gently moving in the evening

breeze; and every now and again the wind would freshen up and sigh through them, till my spirits went down several degrees below the chilly point, and I said to myself that if I were only home again in my old rocking-chair, Sarah and her Cochin eggs would have to try harder than they did to get me to leave it.

"'"Let us go around to the kitchen," whispered Sarah; "they always sit there, for the front of the house hasn't been open for years, so far as I know."

"'Well, we went through the path to the back of the house, which was so thickly strewn with pine-needles that we couldn't have made a sound if we had tried. Sarah was ahead, and when we reached the kitchen door what did she do but open it and walk in, and there sat Zed and Mrs. Granger and the children around the kitchen table; and we knew by their looks that they had heard us at the front door and concluded we had gotten tired and gone home.

"'They looked bewildered, and I stood there without being able to even say "Good-evening to you all"; but Sarah was as sweet and smiling as a May morning, as though she was the most looked-for and welcome guest in the world.

"'They didn't ask us to take seats, but Sarah took one, and I dropped into the one nearest to me and waited to see what she would do next.

"'She took her bonnet off and put it on the chair where she had set her basket of eggs, took her knitting out, and was as cheery and comfortable as if in her own parlor at home, instead of where we weren't wanted.

"'Zed stared at us both with his cold blue-gray eyes, and Mrs. Granger stood looking as helpless as anything would that was so taken by surprise, while the children acted as dazed as if they had just landed upon the ground after a whirlwind had scattered them and their wits in the upper air; for such a cir-

cumstance as a neighbor coming to pass an evening had never happened in their recollection.

"'After a time Mrs. Granger seemed to remember that I had my bonnet on, and she came and untied the strings; and when I took it off she put it on the chair with Sarah's, and sat down beside me without saying a word. And there sat Sarah, knitting away, and chatting to Zed and the children, and not caring for an answer. I took the cue from her, and commenced talking to Mrs. Granger; and she listened and talked a little, and really laughed once or twice when I recalled some of Sarah's and my school exploits.

"'We had all commenced to feel more comfortable, when the clock struck eight; and Zed Granger stopped right in the midst of something he was saying to Sarah, and, looking around at the children like the grim old tyrant he is, he pointed to the clock and then at the old carriage-whip behind the door, and in less time than it takes to tell it

the children were scurrying upstairs to bed, and we had the room to ourselves.

"'Then Sarah, as calm and smiling as usual, brought up the subject of chickens; and reaching for her basket, she gave Mrs. Granger the eggs. And you never saw any one so pleased; and even Zed brightened up—seeing he was getting them for nothing—and said he had always intended buying some, but put it off from time to time; and Sarah smiled in a saintly way and said it was a great pleasure to her to give them to Mrs. Granger.

"'The subject of poultry-raising seemed to be of interest to Mrs. Granger, so I told her of my plans; and during our conversation I could hear Sarah say some witty thing, and Zed would laugh—not the hearty laugh of a genuine, generous-hearted man, but a poor meager affair, as though he begrudged it. Sarah is a born politician, and is on the same side as Zed; and he grinned like an old opossum to hear her laying out some of the

office-holders who hadn't conducted the affairs of the nation according to her notions, and expressing her views exactly according to Zed's mind, but what he wasn't smart enough to say.

"'Well, Sister Atheling, Mrs. Granger and I got so interested in what we were talking of that I missed hearing them; and after a while I heard Sarah mention the name of Philip Starkey, and I almost dropped stitches in my knitting in surprise that she dared mention that name under that roof. You know, Zed Granger had a quarrel with Philip Starkey, and there were hot words and angry threats of a lawsuit—all about a corner-stone which Philip Starkey declared that Zed Granger had moved one night in order to take land off him to add to his own.

"'We all know that Philip Starkey is almost as close in his dealings as Zed; but he asks nothing but his own, and his own he will have; so he moved the stone back. And the next night Zed moved it again; and when

Philip, who was watching, stepped up to replace it, Zed ordered him off his land or there would be trouble, and they have been ill friends ever since.

"'Sarah knew the whole affair, and, like everybody in the neighborhood, believed Philip Starkey to be in the right; so when I heard her mention his name I expected an explosion, and it came; for Zed Granger's fist came down with such force upon the rickety table as to set the tallow candle to dancing.

"'"If you get fifty dollars out of that sheep-faced scoundrel, Philip Starkey, for that lean dog of a missionary," said he, "you may count upon me for seventy-five." And, as if in defiance of Philip Starkey, he took pen and ink and a check-book from a drawer in the old table, filled up a check for seventy-five dollars on the Dorton bank, payable to Sarah Petticord, signed it, and held it up for us to see.

"'"Yes," said he, with one of his grim smiles, "get your fifty from Starkey, and

here's your seventy-five; but until you do get it, my check stays here." And taking an old pocket-book from his coat, he put the check in it, put the pocket-book back, and buttoned up his coat tight and secure.

"'Well, Matilda, I declare if Sarah Petticord didn't rise up and say, "Come, Sister Slocum;" and we put on our bonnets and wraps and left our knitting upon the table, and walked out and down the road to Philip Starkey's.

"'A bright light was shining in the front rooms of his house, and Sarah knocked; and we were invited in as Christians, and not left to force our way like burglars.

"'Sarah told Philip the whole story, and concluded by saying that it rested with him whether we got seventy-five dollars out of Zedekiah Granger or not for the poor creatures out in Nebraska who were down with scarlet fever, and were out of money and far from relatives and helpers.

"'"Well," said Philip Starkey, "I have

enough to do to provide for them who are dependent upon me, and have use for every dollar I can lay hands on, and don't know anything about the missionary and his family you are speaking of; but I do know that it is worth fifty dollars to squeeze one out of old Zed Granger for any purpose; so I will give you fifty, with the understanding that you are to give it back to me if Zed rues his bargain."

"'Sarah promised, and Philip counted out the money and gave it into her hand; and she gave him a receipt for it, and asked him to write a note saying that he had given fifty dollars to the Woman's Home and Foreign Missionary Society for the benefit of a Nebraska missionary's family; and then Sarah thanked him and bade him good-night, and we went back to Zedekiah Granger's.

"'Well, we got there in a few minutes, and opened the front gate and went round to the back of the house, and found the light out, the shutters closed, and the whole place as silent as the grave; and we standing there with fifty

dollars and a note which we doubted of having the chance to read to Zed Granger.

"'I was for going right back to Philip Starkey's with the money; but that was not Sarah Petticord's way.

"'She knocked once, and then we waited; and said she, loud enough for anybody to hear that was listening:

"'"No, Sister Slocum, we will wait until Mrs. Granger lets us in to get our knitting, and Mr. Granger gives us his check. It will save him the trouble of bringing it in the morning, as he would have to come early, fearing we will give back the fifty, thus giving Mr. Starkey the chance to tell the neighborhood that Mr. Granger promised and then refused to live up to it."

"'The words were scarcely out of her mouth when up went a window overhead, and Mrs. Granger's weak voice said:

"'"Is that you, Mrs. Petticord? Mr. Granger will be down in a minute."

"'And sure enough, we heard a shuffling

down the steps, and the light of the candle came through the keyhole, the door was opened, and we stepped in.

"'While I gathered up the knitting, Sarah showed Zed Granger the fifty dollars, and gave him the note which Philip Starkey had written and signed; and without a word, Zed took out his old pocket-book, found the check for seventy-five dollars, and gave it to her. She opened it, saw it was payable to Sarah Petticord, took up the pen which lay there, dipped it in the ink, and wrote her name across the back of it, thanked Zed, and in less time than it takes to tell it we were out of the gate and on our way home.

"'Before we parted at my door Sarah asked me to go to Dorton bank with her the next morning. I said I would go, and she called in her carriage for me, and we had the check cashed, and she had her hundred and twenty-five dollars all ready to give in to the missionary society the same afternoon.

"'Sometimes, Matilda Atheling,' said Sister Slocum, in conclusion, 'I cannot help thinking that Sarah Petticord has the gift of looking into the future. Said she to me that night when we were walking up the road with the check:

"'"I wouldn't have been so persecuting even in such a good cause as this if it hadn't been partly for Zed Granger's own good. I knew he had the money and could well spare it; and if he once gets in the way of giving, it will be better for him and better for his family; it will, in a manner, help Christianize him."'

"And so, Dorcas, I heard the whole story from Sister Slocum, and went home contented; and the next day had reason to know that Sarah Petticord was right in regard to her opinion on that subject, as she is in everything; for I saw Mrs. Granger on her way home from Dorton in their old-fashioned carriage, in which were rolls of muslin and

other things for which the family had been suffering.

"I couldn't help stepping to the gate to speak to her; and she told me that Sarah Petticord, as secretary of the missionary society, had the evening before sent a messenger with the vote of thanks which the members had given Mr. Granger for his liberal donation. And she looked happier than I have ever seen her since she came to live among us from the far West, a poor, timid little creature among strangers, with her home that dreary, shaded house, and her life-companion Zed Granger.

"A new light was in her eyes and a more cheery ring in her voice; and as she drove away and I returned to the house, I thought to myself, 'Well, Sarah Petticord, you certainly are giving a lift to home missions by making an effort to Christianize Zed Granger; he is surely awakened, and I hope he won't have a relapse.'

"There! the horn is blowing for afternoon

service, and I am real glad I got this chance to have a nice long talk. Come to see me soon, for I want to tell you of the people who came to pass the evening at David's while we were there. Come real soon, Dorcas."

CHAPTER IX.

MRS. ATHELING'S INDIAN MISSIONARY.

"YOU couldn't have come at a better time, Dorcas, for I got a letter this afternoon which makes me so happy that I must share my joy with somebody; and Philemon has gone to town and won't be back until late, so I can't share it with him.

"You know that Philemon and I take great interest in the Christianizing of Indians, and we feel richer for every scrap of information we get of the poor creatures.

"Well, while we were at David's that Monday evening after the Quakers' Yearly Meeting, their doctor's wife, Mrs. Dale, called to spend the evening, for she is a great friend of David's wife. She brought her niece, Alice Fleming, with her, and later Dr. Dale came to

go home with them; and he and Philemon and David were talking together, and David's wife and Mrs. Dale, and this left Alice and me to each other; and I never passed a pleasanter evening with a stranger.

"She wasn't much of a talker, but somehow she had a knack of keeping me talking, and she made me feel that I was saying the right thing in the right place and to the right person.

"Well, we got to talking about the Indians, and I told her about Philemon and I going to visit the Indian school at Carlisle; and I never saw a person take more interest than she did.

"I told her how our hearts went out to the poor creatures who had been driven from pillar to post by our nation; and I told her of my thoughts about them, and Philemon's thoughts, and said if we were as young as we once were, and were competent to teach, we would go out among the poor creatures and do what we could to help them.

"The evening passed away too soon, and Dr. Dale and his wife rose to go; and I told Alice Fleming that I was real sorry they were going and I should see her no more, for I should have let her talk more about herself and her interests in life, instead of telling her what Philemon and I were doing and thinking. I somehow felt that she had a history, and that whatever she might have said of herself would have been interesting; and for the second time I said I wished I could know more of her, for she was one of the most attractive creatures I ever met—not beautiful, but a face one could not forget.

"So when she saw that I was really sorry, she said:

"'Dear Mrs. Atheling, you have no need to be, for you have put new thoughts in my mind, and I will strive to make use of them; and I will write to you and tell you the little there is to tell of myself.'

"So here is her letter, and I know you will enjoy it:

"'DEAR MRS. ATHELING: Are you a nobody? If so, you, and you alone, can have affinity with one who, according to the opinion of the majority of her fellow-creatures, never has been of any use in the world; one of whom nothing has ever been expected; one who has always felt herself as one too many in the home circle, and who, in spite of her confirmed belief that whatever is is right, has, until the past few years, pondered the question why she was placed in the world, seeing that there appeared to be no special place or work for her.

"'I am one of five daughters, two older and two younger; therefore not looked up to as were my elder, nor petted as were my younger, sisters.

"'We were orphans, in charge of the widowed sister of my father, Aunt Hope, who had made her home with us after the death of our mother.

"'My mission—if I had one—in the earlier part of my life was to wear out the garments which my elder sisters had outgrown.

"'One might suppose that I was of some use as a finisher, but upon reflection would perceive that had I not been in the way the clothing would have served well for the younger ones, for whom new had of necessity to be bought. So thoroughly was the thing done that not a vestige descended to them, but was always a candidate for the rag-bag in advance of a new supply. As I never romped and never did any domestic work it was a mystery to all concerned how I managed to get through two sets; and when I look back at the question, it is quite as much of a mystery to me.

"'As it was, I not only fell heir to what was cast off, but misfits were found to be plenty good enough for "poor stupid Alice"; and if, by chance, I was seen wearing a new garment of any kind, the conclusion could have been honestly drawn that it had been intended for one of my elder sisters.

"'Once, however, the rule worked the other way, and a new bonnet which had actually been

made for me, from a piece of ruby velvet given me by my aunt Dale, was found to be "a world too large"; and as it just fitted one of my elder sisters, and was extremely becoming, it was ruthlessly taken from me and bestowed upon her, without one sympathizing word for my bitter disappointment. And yet, why should I have expected sympathy, when I never by word or look expressed any feeling upon the subject, but wore the old bonnet without a murmur?

"'The district school being near our home, Aunt Hope accompanied me the first day of my appearance there, for the purpose of introducing me to the teacher, Miss Preston, and putting me under her care.

"'"Alice is very backward in her studies, is indolent, and cares little for books," was my aunt's recommendation to the teacher's good will and favor.

"'"Has she never attended school?" said Miss Preston, in surprise.

"'"Never; she has always been under the

instruction of the governess who was employed for her elder sisters. Now that they have finished, there is no need to employ her longer; so Alice comes to school."

"'"Has thee any objection to telling me thy age?" inquired Miss Preston, turning kindly to me.

"'"Fifteen years and six months," replied I, promptly, with a thrill of pleasure that she considered me capable of speaking for myself, therefore not quite a fool.

"'"We will get along beautifully together, I doubt not," said Miss Preston, turning again to my aunt, who introduced other subjects in which she took more interest.

"'I, in the meantime, sat quietly beside her, gazing at the bonnets and hats hanging upon pegs near the door, and at the new tin bucket and cup with which the thirsty squad were supplied with water—thinking of nothing in particular, but much in general.

"'"So thee cares little for books!" commented Miss Preston, deprecatingly, when my

aunt at length took her departure. "What does thee care for?"

"'My spirits sank at the inquiry.

"'"I do not know," I replied, despondently.

"'"Does thee like to sew, crochet, or do any kind of fancy work?"

"'"No; my elder sisters sicken me with all that."

"'"Does thee like to sweep, dust, or cook?"

"'"No; the two servants do all that; the cook will not have me in the kitchen."

"'"Does thee love pets, and take pleasure in feeding them and attending to their wants?"

"'"No; my younger sisters claim all the pets, and attend to the chickens and other poultry."

"'"Does thee love music, painting, statuary, flowers?"

"'"I love flowers," replied I, hesitatingly.

"'"Thee means me to understand that thee loves to work among them; to sow the seed; to watch the tiny shoots spring above the brown earth; to weed them and water them

when the earth is dry, and protect them from the glaring heat of summer and the frosts of winter?"

"'"No, I don't mean any of those things," I replied. "I love to see them in bloom, and to inhale their perfume when they are tall enough so that I can do it without taking the trouble to stoop."

"'Miss Preston raised her eyes, clasped her hands, and uttered a faint exclamation, of which I did not exert myself to catch the meaning.

"'I do not remember that she questioned me any more that morning; in fact, if I remember rightly, I was left to my own devices the rest of the day. I frequently caught her gazing upon me with an expression not unkindly; and when I returned the glance, she answered with a pleasant smile.

"'My thoughts were occupied with studying the physiognomy of my fellow-pupils, one, in particular, exciting my rather latent curiosity by his, to me, singular request,

given in an earnest, businesslike tone of voice:

"'"Please, Miss Preston, may I go to sleep?"

"'The teacher glanced at the tiny clock which stood upon a shelf over her desk, and replied, pleasantly:

"'"Yes, thee can take thy nap, Benjamin, after which I hope thee will commit perfectly to memory the three lines of multiplication table which I wish thee to recite before noon."

"'The words had scarcely reached the boy when he folded his arms upon the desk, dropped his head upon them, and in two minutes he was asleep.

"'In less than a quarter of an hour he awoke bright and alert, and attacking his task with vigor, repeated it without one mistake.

"'When the pupils were dismissed for the morning, and were rushing out of the schoolhouse door, I was the last to leave my seat; and while listlessly tying my bonnet-strings, was accosted by Miss Preston.

"'"I noticed that my management of Benjamin attracted thy attention," said she; "and to a new pupil it calls for a word of explanation. Benjamin is a bright, energetic boy, but his nature seems to crave the refreshment of sleep at least twice during the day. Like the great Napoleon, he has the power of sleeping at will; and as he amply makes up for lost time, I deem it best to grant his request; and it has ceased to attract the notice of any but new scholars."

"'This, I reflected in after years, was the key-note of Miss Preston's success as a teacher; she studied the character and requirements of her pupils with a conscientious interest equaled by none whom I have met before or since.

"'The morning of my second day at school I reached there before any other pupil, and found Miss Preston alone at her desk, reading, in the clean, quiet room.

"'It was early in the autumn, but the mornings were cool, and a wood-fire crackled

and sparkled in the old-fashioned tin-plate stove. The rows of wooden pegs were as yet without the accustomed bonnets and caps, and the new, bright tin cup was turned top down upon the inverted bucket.

"'Outside in the sweet morning air rustled the dry blades of the corn which was stacked for husking in a field adjoining, while the birds whistled and chirped in the great oak and hickory trees which shaded the school-house.

"'"I am glad thee has come so early, Alice," said Miss Preston, rising to meet me. "I have been thinking of thee, and would like thee to tell me something about thyself. As thee knows, I have but lately come into the neighborhood, and I know nothing about my pupils only as I study them for myself. Now, is thee really serious in saying thee does not care to do anything?"

"'"Nothing that is going on around me," I replied. "I want to climb mountains, cross oceans, creep down into the heart of the earth, encounter dangers, have hairbreadth escapes;

I want to do something, be somebody. O Miss Preston, I feel sometimes as though I were in an iron cage with no room to turn."

"'Miss Preston did not chide me as Aunt Hope & Co. would have done; she did not rebuke this outburst by even a frown; instead, she took my hand, her eyes full of tears.

"'"I fear thee has been reading cheap novels, my dear child," she said.

"'"No; Aunt Hope will not let them come into the house; besides, I have no taste for them."

"'"Thee is not the first and only one who has felt restless and longed for a change. But can thee not take comfort in doing the duty nearest thy hand and trusting God to give thee a broader field in His own good time?"

"'"But I have no duties, as I told you yesterday," said I. "They all say I am of no use, and they are right."

"'"But thee has enough to do for the

present in acquiring an education that will fit thee for a position and thus enable thee to secure one."

"'"My governess told me that, notwithstanding I was the younger, I was far in advance of my sisters, although I appeared to study so little. She told me privately, before she left, that she could teach me no more. Aunt Hope only sends me here to get me out of the way."

"'"Thee really astonishes me. Thy aunt said thee cared little for books, and I supposed thee knew so little that I was loath to question thee before younger pupils, so resolved to see thee alone to-day."

"'"I long for something different to do—something that will give me trouble to study out."

"'Miss Preston did not reply, for at that moment the door opened and two little pupils came pattering in, followed by others, and I went to the desk which had been assigned me.

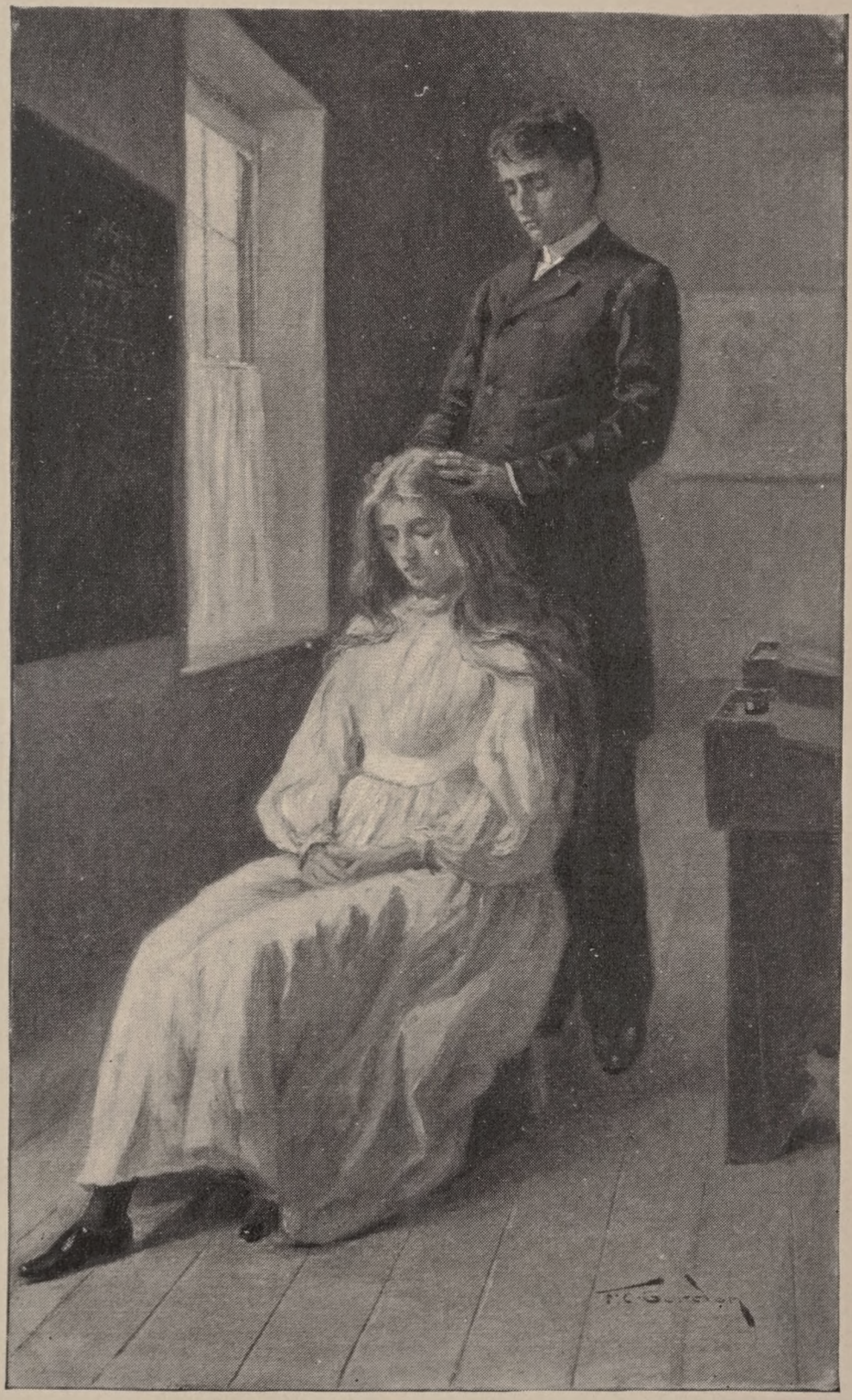
"'At recess Miss Preston had a visitor—a

cousin named Edward Preston, to whom, as I had not gone out with the others, she introduced me. He had just left college, was tall and stately like Miss Preston, and was the handsomest man I had ever seen.

"'"Alice," said Miss Preston, after I had offered him my hand and then blushingly withdrew it, remembering that it was not etiquette on first presentation, "Edward is an amateur phrenologist; perhaps he can give us a little light upon the subject we were discussing."

"'I had heard much of this phrenology; it was in fashion in my mother's day in our rural neighborhood, and had revived, as old fashions will, after many years. Everybody was discussing it, generally in terms of derision; but Miss Preston had asked it as a favor to herself; I had commenced to adore her, and signified immediate assent.

"'Following her direction, I removed the net from my hair, which, freed from restraint, fell in long glossy waves to my waist. It



ALICE FLEMING AND EDWARD PRESTON. (Page 196.)

was my one beauty, and I kept it in splendid condition.

"'Mr. Preston's firm white hand glided gently over it, and after a few minutes' silence he said:

"'"Has thee ever attempted the study of languages?"

"'"No, sir," was my reply.

"'"Thee should make the effort; if I am not much mistaken, thee has a wonderful talent in that direction; I never saw an organ more fully developed."

"'I clasped my hands in ecstasy; my face flushed, and tears of joy sprang to my eyes. Miss Preston and her cousin smiled, and for the first time in my life I saw glances of admiration bent upon me.

"'"Edward, thee is to pass the winter with us; perhaps thee would not object to giving her lessons in Latin, by way of an experiment?" said Miss Preston.

"'"It would be a charming pastime for me," replied he, turning to me, "and I will

give thee a lesson to-day if agreeable to thee."

"'And so it was decided that I was to stop with Miss Preston on my way home from school in the evening, after gaining my aunt's consent at noon.

"'As I had surmised, her consent was not difficult to gain; and when we reached the comfortable homestead of the Prestons we found Mr. Edward ready, his books on the table before him; and the very happiest hour I ever spent was taking my first lesson in Latin.

"'Like one in a happy, happy dream, I passed on my way home, and found my uncle and aunt Dale, who had come from the city where I met you, and where I now reside, to pay us a visit—the first since my mother's death.

"'For the first time in my experience I did not feel awkward and constrained, but went quickly forward, kissed my aunt, shook cordially my uncle's hand, and told them how heartily glad I was to see them.

"'"Why, she is a fine-looking girl!" I heard my good-hearted, blundering old uncle say as I was leaving the room to put away my bonnet and books. "*I* don't think she is so homely."

"'The emphasis upon the pronoun left me in no doubt that my appearance had been the subject of discussion, and the verdict was evidently unfavorable; but even that was powerless to dampen my spirits.

"'Every evening I called at the Prestons and took a Latin lesson; my improvement was rapid, and I was happier than I ever imagined it possible for me to be.

"'One evening, upon my return from school, Aunt Dale called me to come up to her room, as she had something to tell me.

"'"We expect to leave you in a few days, Alice," said she, kindly, "and your uncle and I have been revolving a plan which I am to tell you. We think of going to Europe in the spring, to remain at least three years. I would like to be of some benefit to my name·

sake and my only sister's daughter, so we will take you with us if you will go. We expect to visit all places of interest, but will remain for the most of the time in Germany and the northern part of Italy. I saw Miss Preston last evening—she called here while you were out; she says your progress in Latin is phenomenal. Do you think it possible to acquire enough German and Italian in six months to make yourself understood? It would be of great advantage to us all if you could; but of course, whether or not, we wish to have you go with us."

"'Truly, this world was becoming to me a place of joyful surprises. What could I say, when I had sufficiently recovered myself, but that I would make every effort to learn the languages, although I could not in my bewilderment see how it could be done without a teacher.

"'But Miss Preston was my good genius; she had a friend who had resided for years as governess in a German family, and spoke the

language perfectly; and she promised to see her on my behalf.

"'Mr. Edward knew something of Italian, and wished to know more; so we agreed to study it together.

"'So, this problem being happily solved, my aunt Hope agreed that I should give up several studies and devote more time to the languages; and the winter passed quickly and pleasantly away.

"'The first week in June found us upon the ocean, sorry to part with my home and relatives, sorry to bid adieu to Miss Preston and Mr. Edward, but happy in the enjoyment of realized hopes.

"'Three years in Germany, France, and Italy perfected me in the languages of those countries, and I returned glad of my acquirements, and glad to be back in my native land, especially as my home was to be with Uncle and Aunt Dale until Edward Preston claimed me for his wife in fulfilment of the promise made to him before we went abroad.

"'The next week after meeting with you, Edward and I were united; and since our marriage he has been appointed to an Indian agency which was first suggested to my mind through your earnest sympathy for them and their wrongs.

"'We are intending to organize a school and Sunday-school among them, in the management of which we will both share; and I shall have the opportunity to master a new language in order to be the efficient teacher and missionary I hope to be; and Edward is fully satisfied that I shall acquire it as easily as I have done the others.

"'And now, at length, it appears that I am to be of some use in the world, and in a field not crowded with laborers; and Edward and I go forth with earnest, happy, united hearts upon our mission.

"'Should any one ask if I believe in phrenology, or, in other words, that the characteristics of the mind are manifest to the sense of touch through the medium of bumps

upon the cranium, I should answer, as my friends affirmed I answered the majority of questions in my younger days, "I don't know." But should they ask me if I consider encouragement a motive power in developing latent ambition, and helpful Christian companionship such as yours an incentive to well-doing, I should reply with all the energy of a happy heart, "Yea, verily!"'

"Well, Dorcas, when I read that letter I just clasped my two hands in thankfulness and said, 'Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;' and had scarcely uttered it when Satan was on hand to discourage me.

"'Now, Matilda Atheling,' said he, 'you are the most conceited creature on earth. You take all the credit to yourself of making an Indian missionary; whereas, if you believe that these things are intended to be from the beginning, as you are so fond of quoting, that girl would have been a missionary without your encouragement.'

"Well, for a minute my gladness was dampened; but I sent up another little prayer, and then said, 'Get thee hence, Satan! It was intended from the beginning that Alice Fleming should be a missionary, and it was also intended that I should put the thought into her head.' Then I took up my knitting, at peace with myself and all the world."

CHAPTER X.

THE DOLL THAT AFTERWARD BECAME A MISSIONARY.

"I AM really glad, Dorcas, that you came to me for flowers to decorate the school-room for your coming entertainment.

"I will let them stay uncut until you are leaving, and in the meantime we will sit in the arbor in the garden, for it is too lovely to sit indoors.

"There is an easy rocking-chair already there, and I will take this one, and we will be comfortable.

"I was wishing to see you, to tell you of a new member I hope to get for our missionary society; and as you would never guess who it is, I will tell you—it is Mrs. Zedekiah Gran-

ger; yes, truly, it is Zed Granger's wife; and I must tell you how it came about.

"One evening I was coming home from Primrose's, where I had been passing the day; and you know the nearest way is through Granger's woods, and I ventured to take it, although everybody knows he is so cross-grained and stingy that he looks upon any one crossing any part of his farm as a trespasser.

"It was a lovely evening; the birds were making the place jubilant with their vesper-songs, and the air was sweet with the odor of May-apples and wild-flowers. I had reached that cool, beautiful spring of water in the heart of the woods when who should I see poking among the bushes with a long stick but Mrs. Granger; and I knew in a minute that one of her turkey-hens had stolen its nest, and she was hunting for it.

"Well, I laid my bonnet and parasol on the log beside the spring, and helped her search; and after a little while I found the nest with

a beautiful lot of eggs. And then we sat on the log and talked; for, as Zed wouldn't have an idea how long it might take her to find the nest, and consequently would not sneer, as the old tyrant always does if there is the least excuse, she was not only willing, but eager to stay. And you don't know, unless you happen to talk with her when Zed is not present, what excellent company she is.

"She told me all about her home and people in the far West, and of her first meeting with Zed, and of her next younger sister being a missionary; and really, the lines left her face when she was telling of those happy days, and she looked young and pretty in the soft, mellow sunset, with a background of deep-green foliage shading her. I always had a warm, sympathizing feeling for her, on account of her monotonous, dull life; but she was so shy I could never get acquainted with her, especially as we met so seldom; but since that evening by the spring I really love her, because she is so innocent, so good and kind

and unselfish. Her name was Jennie Hasson, and her father was a coal-burner, who, with her mother and a large family of brothers and sisters, all younger than herself, lived in a cabin upon a few acres of land which he had cleared from the forest in Kansas.

"With all their hard work, the Hassons were unable to secure more than the necessities of life; but they were God-fearing people, were contented in the sphere in which He had placed them, and were struggling to teach their children the best they could under very adverse circumstances.

"Life was not without its pleasures, particularly to the children. The great, dewy, homelike forest close at hand, vocal with the song of birds, fragrant with wild-flowers, and filled with innocent animal life, was always restful and refreshing to Jennie, who sometimes toiled beyond her strength in aid of the hard-working mother. In this forest the children played the greater part of each day, and in summer's heat or winter's cold its

treasures were laid at their feet; they were kings and queens, and the forest was their realm. It furnished herbs for their mother's simple store of medicines, squirrels and rabbits for their table, besides berries, nuts, wild grapes, and plums. Oh, it was a loving foster-mother to the little ones, and they loved it as only children can.

"Well, Dorcas, she said that in those days the one longing of her life was to possess a doll—a real store doll, with flaxen hair, and eyes that could open and shut. Her mother had, in some comparatively leisure hour, made her one of rags, and her father had with charcoal drawn upon its white-muslin face very pretty features indeed. She loved it, but could not forget her aspiration; and strange to say—for Mrs. Granger looks upon it almost as a miracle—the doll came, not only with the curls, and eyes that could open and shut, but under proper pressure could say 'papa' and 'mama.' With such accomplishments, it was not a matter of surprise

that it required a cyclone to bring it; yet such was the case—a storm which uprooted forest-trees and spread desolation far and wide.

"That morning in April had been warm and cloudless, and the younger children had played in the forest until noon, and were taking their after-dinner nap. Jennie had been helping her mother; then she went to the creek in the forest to catch some fish for supper. After a time the rumbling of thunder was heard, and an ominous stillness was followed by a roaring sound which caused Jennie to spring to her feet in affright, for she knew a cyclone was at hand. She started to run for the shelter of the cabin, when she heard a voice, and, turning, saw a lady pale with excitement coming toward her.

"'Dear child,' the lady said, 'I am frightened almost to death. I was gathering wild-flowers and ferns when I heard the thunder; I tried to get out of the forest, but I took the wrong way, and have no idea where to go for refuge from the storm.'

"'Come with me,' said Jennie, grasping her hand; 'our cabin is not far away; but we must run for our lives.'

"They had not a moment to lose, for the terrible din was following them, which, having heard, no one ever forgets—the swirling roar of the wind, the musketry of hail, the crashing of falling trees, the booming of thunder, and the deluge of rain. But they reached the cabin and sank breathless upon the floor, while the angry tempest, as though despising such poor prey as the humble abode, swept on and left them safe and unharmed.

"'Praise God, from whom all blessings flow!' exclaimed the lady, as she rose to her feet, with tears streaming from her eyes. 'You have saved my life, little girl; for if the trees had not fallen upon me, nor the hail killed me, I should have died of fright alone in the forest. Tell me what I can do in return for your great kindness to me.'

"'She wants nothing, I am sure,' said the mother; for Jennie remained silent, though

thinking of a doll. 'Take a seat and rest; you look very pale and ill.'

"'Yes, I feel faint, and shall have to walk home—or at least to my cousin's house, where I am spending the day—for they do not know where to send the carriage for me.'

"'Where does your cousin live? Maybe Jennie could go and tell them,' said Mrs. Hasson.

"'I cannot direct you from here, for I do not know in the least where I am. But my name is Mrs. Meredith, and I live in Eastbrook; and this morning drove over to Mrs. Livingston's, where the ladies of our missionary society have met this afternoon to pack a box of dolls to send to heathen children in India. While waiting for the ladies to assemble, the thought came to me that a bouquet of wild-flowers pressed in a book would be a pleasant reminder of her own country to our young lady missionary there, so went out to gather it. I intended keeping upon the edge of the forest, that my cousin's house might be

in view, but saw so many beautiful specimens that I wandered on and lost sight of it; and when the storm came on so suddenly I grew bewildered and lost my way.'

"Well, Dorcas, Mrs. Granger said that at the word 'dolls' her heart throbbed with delight, and her face flushed so deeply that she was afraid Mrs. Meredith would notice it.

"'I know where Mrs. Livingston lives,' said she; 'I will run through the forest and tell her you are here.'

"'You dear, good child,' said the lady, kindly, 'you are a friend indeed; but it must be a long distance, and you are trembling with excitement.'

"Before the words were fairly uttered, Jennie had flown upon her errand. The storm was entirely over, and the sun shining brightly. Birds were singing, raindrops were sparkling like diamonds upon grass and foliage, and the air was redolent with woodland scents. Over the trunks of some fallen trees, and around the branches of others,

Jennie sped. And while she was gone Mrs. Meredith had a quiet talk with Mrs. Hasson, the result of which was that when Jennie returned in a carriage—the first she had ever been in—a clean apron was in readiness for her, and with some other little changes in her appearance she was in readiness to accept Mrs. Meredith's pressing invitation to accompany her to Mrs. Livingston's, where the ladies were already assembled.

"Oh, the dolls, the dolls, the dolls! What a glimpse of fairy-land it was to the delighted eyes of Jennie! She crossed her hands on her faded gingham apron, and with tears running down her cheeks looked from one to another. Large dolls, small dolls, lady dolls, baby dolls, walking dolls, talking dolls; some looking careless and happy, others hairless and cappy. Dear, dear! she said that never in her whole life had she had such a joyful surprise. And then the dresses!—silk, satin, and velvet of every shade, with fleecy white robes by way of contrast.

"Afterward she remembered seeing Mrs. Meredith and the others hold a consultation over the large box in which the dolls were to be packed; but she never suspected the subject of it, and watched each beauty wrapped carefully in tissue-paper and put in; and when all were secure in their places except a large and beautiful one on the piano, she had scarcely time to wonder why it was left out before Mrs. Meredith put it in her arms and told her it was hers; and she was so bewildered by the unexpected joy that she could only look at the beautiful thing in her arms in silence. But the ladies understood her emotion, though they did not know that the possession of such a doll had been nearly a lifelong wish.

"When Mrs. Meredith was ready to return to Eastbrook she took Jennie and her doll in the carriage, and went somewhat out of her way to leave her at the cabin, where she had another chat with the mother, and again thanked her for her kindness.

"The doll in its pink-satin robe was truly an inspiration to the little Hassons, and had its mission, being an incentive to neatness and goodness—a view of it as it lay in the mother's bureau-drawer being the reward for well-doing, and for any extra goodness the privilege of holding it in their arms for a little while.

"Mrs. Meredith's thoughtfulness did not stop there; she saw that Mrs. Hasson and Jennie took interest in hearing of mission work, so she sent them all the interesting publications relating to it that she could command; and Jennie and Julia were filled with the wish to become missionaries, although they never imagined that they would ever be capable, or that their mother could spare them to go to India as the young lady had done of whom Mrs. Meredith had spoken.

"Time passed on, and a log school-house was built upon a clearing within walking-distance of their cabin, and an uncle of Zed Granger, who was a trustee, wrote to him to

come there and teach. Zed went; and as it was the custom for teachers to board around at the homes of the scholars, he became acquainted with the Hassons; and when Jennie was seventeen and he twenty years older, they were married, and came here.

"No doubt he saw that she was competent and willing to work, and had the meek, pliant disposition so agreeable to one of his tyrannical nature; and we may imagine the life that young creature lived, with no society but Zed and his stern father, the mother having died when Zed was an infant.

"But Mrs. Granger made no allusion to anything of the kind; she merely said that she had brought the doll, and it had proved just such a treasure to her children as it had been to her little brothers and sisters; and I know that had it not been for it, the little Grangers would have stood as poor a chance of seeing or owning one as did the children in the clearing. Like the little Hassons, they never surmised that such a lovely affair could

be for every-day use, sufficient being the joy of knowing it was there, a 'well-spring of pleasure' indeed.

"Then Mrs. Granger told me of her sister Julia going as missionary to India through the help of Mrs. Meredith and Mrs. Livingston; and then I spoke to her of our missionary society, and told her what we were doing and what had been done.

"'Come and join us, dear Mrs. Granger, said I; 'we shall be so glad to have you.'

"Her face flushed, and she looked down at her faded calico dress.

"'I am afraid I could not do my share of giving,' said she.

"'Don't think of that,' said I; 'give your presence; there is so much encouragement in numbers.'

"'Well, I will if I can,' replied she, hesitatingly; 'when is your next meeting?'

"'Nearly four weeks off; but to-morrow afternoon we are to meet at the parsonage to pack a box of clothing for the family of a

WALKED THROUGH THE DAISY-GROWN MEADOW. (Page 219.)

missionary in Nebraska; come and help us, Mrs. Granger.'

"Deeply interested as she appeared to be, she was not willing to promise, so I did not press the question. Instead, I told her it was the missionary for whose assistance Mr. Granger had given the seventy-five dollars and Mr. Starkey fifty; and that Mr. Granger's money had been sent by check as soon as possible, and we in the meantime had been preparing the clothing. I added that the missionary's wife was a niece of Sister Slocum, and that they had several children, one of them a little girl—a hopeless cripple. Then we arose, and in the beautiful twilight walked through the woods and the daisy-grown meadow, and parted at her gate.

"Must you go, Dorcas? Well, I will cut the flowers, and am glad to have the chance to oblige you."

CHAPTER XI.

MRS. GRANGER'S CONTRIBUTION.

"GOOD-AFTERNOON, Dorcas. It was very kind in you to invite me to tea this evening to meet your old friends, and I came early that I might have the time before they come to tell you of the box that was sent by our missionary society to the Nebraska missionary.

"He wrote a letter to the society, which was read at our last meeting; and I asked Sarah Petticord to lend it to me, that I might bring it to read to you as promised.

"Serena wrote one to her aunt Slocum telling her of their joy and gratitude for such a lot of excellent clothing, and told her all the particulars about its arrival.

"We met at the parsonage, and had a fine,

large store-box, and plenty of good, serviceable articles to fill it; for it appeared that after Zed Granger had given seventy-five dollars for missions, nobody was willing to give anything mean. Besides, Sarah Petticord had taken care to give them one of her practical, outspoken speeches the day we met and decided to make up the box of clothing; and judging by the quality of the garments given, people remembered it.

"'If any of us,' said she, 'can spare some ready-made garments suitable for any member of the missionary's family, it would save time and money to send them, and what is saved in that way could be invested in a pair of warm blankets for them; but we must bear in mind that missionaries and their wives are gentlemen and ladies, and it behooves us not to insult them by throwing to them the cast-off clothes we would not wear ourselves. We will keep such at home for carpet-rags, and not run the risk of having to blush to acknowledge that we were the donors.'

"There was no danger of not fitting the missionary, nor Serena, nor the children; for Sarah had written to him to send the size of each. He sent his measure as taken by a tailor, and we were glad, for it had been decided that the fifty dollars given by Philip Starkey was to be used for buying him a suit of clothes and overcoat, while Zed Granger's seventy-five was to be sent by check to use as he pleased.

"We did not mention to the missionary or any one else how Zed Granger and Philip Starkey happened to give that money; it would do no good, and might do harm. Not even the other members of the society knew it; and unless Philip Starkey tells it—and I don't think he will—it will never be known.

"Well, just as I got to the parsonage that day, who should I see coming but Mrs. Granger; so I waited, and we went in together, and she made no pretense of concealing that she was glad not to have to go in alone. Every one was pleased to see her, and said so, with-

out betraying the surprise they felt that she came; and the minister's wife gently removed her bonnet, and made her feel at home, as she does all who go there, and gave her a comfortable seat. Mrs. Granger had a package in her hand, and kept it while she sat in a corner of the parlor watching them put the things in the box.

"Well, Dorcas, when it was about half filled and there was a space in one corner in which nothing seemed to fit, Mrs. Granger, who sat on the edge of her chair as though waiting to see such an opportunity, came forward and put the package in my hand, and said:

"'Maybe it will fill that place.'

"'What is it?' I asked, in a low voice.

"'It is my doll,' said she, and she had tears in her eyes.

"'Do you really intend sending it?' said I. 'Are you willing to part with it?'

"'Yes,' said she, 'in such a cause as this. It is for the little crippled girl, and you can tell her all I told you about it if you choose.'

"'May I take off the wrapper and look at it, and show it to the others?' said I.

"'If you choose,' said she, and went back to her seat.

"Well, we all looked at it, and every member wanted to hold it a moment in her arms when I told them the history of it; and then they all thanked Mrs. Granger for her happy thought, for not one of them had brought a doll, or anything for the children except clothes.

"It had the sweetest face I ever saw, such as I imagine angels have—so fine and pure and innocent; and its pink-satin robe was as spotless as though it had never been outside a bandbox. Sarah Petticord said she would write out the history of it for the crippled child, and send it in the letter that was to go by mail.

"Well, after the box was packed, and the lid with the address upon it nailed on carefully, the minister's wife said we must stay and take a cup of tea with her; and all were

pleased to accept but Mrs. Granger, who appeared to have something on her mind which prevented her, yet longed to stay. So the minister's wife did not insist too much, for she did not know but something disagreeable might happen at home, if she did not come when expected, to rob her of the pleasure it would have been to her to remain.

"So Mrs. Granger went home; and as she bade each one good-by by shaking hands all around, we gave her a cordial invitation to visit us; for we all have a warm feeling for the inoffensive, timid little woman.

"And now I will read the letter:

"'DEAR FRIENDS AND HELPERS: I write in response to your kind and welcome letter which gave us the intelligence that you were contributing a box of clothing for us, our first words when we read it being, "How wonderful is the goodness of God to us!" Knowing that winter was close at hand and the bitter cold would be severe upon us, we

prayed for help, but had not the least idea from whence or in what way it would come. I have lost my horse, and had not received a cent of money from any source for months until your letter came with a check for seventy-five dollars, which I shall have cashed as soon as I can. I thank the dear, good friend, or friends, whose contribution it is; may they never know what it is to want for anything. It has been a lever to lift a burden from my heart, saving us from what was almost despair. We are in the midst of a wilderness, two hundred miles from the frontiers of civilization, and on the old hunting-grounds of the fierce Sioux Indians. The railway will soon reach our beautiful garden country. You need not look on the map to find us, for we are so young that no geography or map has acknowledged us, and in three months the name of our place has been changed three times, twice by the railway company. We have a collection of rough board shanties, a few tents, and some sod

houses; but we number three hundred people, and when it is known that the railway company will put up workshops at this point, people will rush in and we shall soon have a town.

"'We have no school-house nor church; there is not a church building in the whole county. We are holding services and our Sunday-school in a sod house about twenty by fourteen feet in size. A family of six live in the two small rooms.

"'We have met in this private house, with the glad consent of the owner, ever since we have been here, and happy seasons of worship we have had. We have hauled lumber fifty miles to put up a church, which we expect to do as soon as the site for the town is surveyed; then we will have a "bee" to put up the building.

"'The blizzards here are something terrible —no pen can describe them; but we have compensation in the fertile earth, the pure air, and the knowledge that we are fulfilling

God's command, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel."

"'As you kindly request, I inclose the measure for clothing for each of my family, and feel myself fortunate in having the measure given by my tailor before I left the East. Thanking you again for your benevolent and Christian thought of us, I am yours in the bonds of our Redeemer.'

"Well, the box reached there safely and in good time; and Serena wrote a letter the very next morning to tell us so—a short one, because she did not wish to wait a moment longer than necessary to inform us that it had been received; but she said that they would write a long letter in reply to the one which Sarah Petticord had written for the society.

"But she did take time to tell the society of the joy of the crippled child over the doll sent by Mrs. Granger. Upon the day of its arrival she had asked to be propped up in a

chair by the one window of their home, that she might show it to the passers-by. And everybody halted to look at the beautiful thing, among them an Indian girl of about twelve years of age—a shy, wild creature, with tangled hair and ragged blanket; and it was wonderful to watch the change that passed over her swarthy features at the sight, so new and wonderful to her. The crippled child beckoned to her to come in, but the Indian shook her head in refusal. But by degrees she got nearer, then into the room; and after having washed her hands, and being willing to have a clean apron put over her blanket, she was rewarded by having the doll in her arms, which she rocked and crooned to like a fond mother, her glittering black eyes beaming with tenderness.

"The next morning she was again at her post of observation, and was beckoned in by the crippled child, and made a proposition which Serena had been hoping for, being weak and weary:

"'Me come work; help nurse doll.'

"So while Serena was writing, the young Indian girl, dressed in one of the gowns which the arrival of the box allowed being taken from the meager stock belonging to the elder daughter, was helping about the house, and, Serena has every reason to believe, will be willing for the sake of the doll to remain and learn the ways of civilization.

"There come your friends through the gate, Dorcas. I am glad I got the chance to tell you this, and will tell them also, if you think it will interest them."

CHAPTER XII.

A VISIT TO THE GRANGERS.

"How d'ye do, Dorcas? I have been to Dorton to see Mrs. Chamberlain, who has a bad spell of neuralgia, poor creature! and on my way back thought I must stop to tell you of Sister Tabitha's visit, and to say how sorry I am that she happened to be here during your holiday and you were not at home to see her; she would have so enjoyed seeing you.

"Only one little week could she give us this time—seven beautiful days, which Philemon and I live over and bear in our hearts.

"She talked with us of old times and new times, and of mission work—a noble subject, and of deepest interest to Tabitha. She has a happy way of thinking that all good work in this world is mission work, and that we

are all missionaries of some kind to somebody. She believes that to make people good they must be made as comfortable as possible; and that it is our duty to be as happy and cheerful as we can, for our own sakes as well as for the influence it has over others.

"Some people might think it very easy for a wealthy person like Tabitha to talk in this way, and that her opinion would change if she should happen to lose her property; but we who have known her all her life know that she always was cheery, unselfish, and helpful, and, above all, sincere in word and deed. There was a little time in her life, she said, with a flush of embarrassed feeling at the remembrance, when she allowed the weeds of riches to crowd out the sweet flowers of love and charity and benevolence which should have filled her pathway; but she thanked God that He had put it into the heart of her dear brother Philemon to open her eyes to her failing, and she would never again look upon money save as something in-

trusted to her keeping for the benefit of those who needed help.

"She inquired for all the people she knew when a girl, and among them Zed Granger; and somehow her heart went out in pity when we told her of the secluded, cheerless life he and his family were leading.

"'He is not altogether to blame, Sister Matilda,' said she; 'he had a dull, dreary home when he was a boy, and I think no pleasures of after life can compensate for a miserable childhood. He knew nothing but hard work on the barren farm which he has brought to productiveness; and his home, with its bare walls and carpetless floors, was desolate beyond description. His only society when there was his harsh, ill-tempered father and an ignorant old woman who served as housekeeper; for his mother died before I can remember.

"'His father believed that severity and mortification of the flesh was the only way to train children; so Zed was forced to wear

clothes to school that would have disgraced a beggar, and as he was one whose feelings never appeared upon the surface, the scholars took it for granted that he had none, and he was taunted and laughed at for what he could not help.

"'As he grew older he struggled hard for what education he has, sitting up at nights when his whole nature cried for rest and sleep, studying by the light of a tallow candle from the out-of-date books that his father used before him, and maybe his grandfather, for all I know to the contrary. Then when he had a call from his uncle to come out to a new settlement to teach school, his surroundings were, I suppose, no better nor more genial than while living until nearly middle age here with his father—almost as secluded as though in the heart of a wilderness. They avoided the world, and the world let them choose their own way of dealing with it; but, Matilda, I think we were wrong; a little seeking of them—a little attention—

might have made the old man happier while he lived, and might have benefited Zed. I would like to see him; and knowing he will never call to see me, let us ask Philemon to go with us to pay them a visit this evening.'

"Well, Dorcas, I was completely taken aback by this request. I wanted to do everything in my power to make Tabitha's sojourn pleasant, but a visit to Zed Granger was not down on the program. However, I promised to go if Philemon were willing, having a hope at the same time that he would refuse. But no indeed; he would have gone, if possible, to the ends of the earth with Tabitha, and to Zed Granger's was but a short and pleasant walk.

"'But why do you want to go, Sister Tabitha?' said Philemon.

"'Because our visit might do him a little good,' said she.

"'Well, I misjudge if it is not more than it will do us,' said I; 'but I am willing to go.' And then I told Tabitha of my one visit there

to collect money for the Bennetts, and she laughed in the way that used to make this old farm-house ring with merriment.

"'You certainly did not use much tact in the business, Sister Matilda,' said she.

"'No; I saw that myself when Sarah Petticord tried another plan and succeeded. But he treated me better than he did one of our elders, who had it upon his conscience that Mr. Granger was not visited by the church people and invited to attend the services; for Zed, when he found that to be his only errand, ordered him out of his house, and said the church did not want him so much as it wanted his money.'

"'His whole previous life has unfitted him for appeals of the kind,' said Tabitha, deprecatingly.

"'But there had to be a beginning, Sister Tabitha, and none of us knew from what point to attack Zed Granger.'

"'You may be sure he is not happy,' said she; 'he is in discord with himself and the

world, and will remain so until he comes into companionship with God and his fellow-creatures. In a dim, vague way he may be longing to be a Christian, and does not know that it is the simplest thing in the world, as I can say from my own experience. It is only doing right in the present, and letting the future take care of itself by trusting in the Saviour. The way was pointed out to me by dear Philemon,' said she, turning to him with tears in her eyes, 'and I have found true happiness in walking in it. By becoming interested in missions, other needs were brought to my knowledge; I found life to be full of sweet duties, and time is all too short for what I long to do.'

"So we went to Zed Granger's that evening; and although Mrs. Granger and the children had for a moment the dazed look they wore when Mary Slocum and Sarah Petticord called, they soon recovered themselves; and she invited us into the best room, which appeared not to have been opened for years to

the joyous sunlight, so dim and solemn it looked, as though waiting for some mournful event.

"Zed came in just as we had removed our bonnets and taken seats; and Sister Tabitha jumped up and clasped his hand, and said she could not think of going back to Minnesota without seeing him, her old neighbor and schoolmate, with whom she had stood in the same class. So she and Philemon and Zed sat in a group and talked of old times; and Sister Tabitha took care to recall nothing unpleasant or sad, but only things which had transpired in the neighborhood to make people laugh at the time, and afterward when called to memory; and Zed's stern face relaxed, and he looked ten years younger than when he came in. Mrs. Granger and I had plenty of subjects to interest us, for that evening by the spring had made me acquainted with her and her family. She told me more of their lives on the frontier, and of her missionary sister, whose letters she was

willing should be read in the society; and all and everything she said was interesting, told in her simple, earnest manner, the children sitting by and listening, delighted in their timid way with visitors, and the privilege of staying up beyond their time; for Zed was so entertained that he had forgotten them.

"After a time he brought some rare and curious coins for Tabitha and Philemon to see; and while they were looking them over, he went out, and soon returned with a tray of cracked walnuts. They had been gathered from the tree which we had known from childhood, standing by the line-fence which divides the Granger meadow from the woodland, and which bears the finest and largest walnuts I ever saw. While Mrs. Granger went for plates he took from an old-time bookcase a package of horseshoe nails and passed them around; and there we sat and chatted, and picked out the rich kernels with the horseshoe nails, and ate.

"Yes, it was a little out of the way in the

line of refreshments, but the kindness was the same, and proclaimed the awakening of a hospitable spirit in Zed; and Sister Tabitha's eyes shone with pleasure.

"'Nothing could please me better than these,' said she, sincerely; 'not only because I am fond of them, but because they call to mind the days when a large rock and a small one, a pile of walnuts, and a horseshoe nail were great elements in school-children's happiness.'

"Well, we ate and talked; and when we had finished, and Zed carried out the shells and Mrs. Granger the dishes, Sister Tabitha whispered to Philemon and me:

"'Please invite them to tea to-morrow evening.' And before we could answer they came in, and we joined in the conversation where we left off; and I don't know when we ever passed a pleasanter evening.

"'Sister Tabitha can remain with us only a few days, Mrs. Granger,' said I, as we arose to leave, 'and you and Mr. Granger will be giving us all a great pleasure if you will

come over to-morrow evening to tea; come early, that we may have a good long evening to talk.'

"'Yes,' said Philemon to Zed, 'I want to show you some improvements I have made in my barn; it is not so large and convenient as yours, but I am doing what I can to improve it; come while it is light enough to see it.'

"Zed hesitated, and we thought he was intending to refuse, when Sister Tabitha came to the rescue.

"'Certainly he will come,' said she, in her bright, cheery way; 'you do not imagine that he would pay his old schoolmate such a poor compliment as to refuse, when she waived all ceremony and made the first call?'

"Then Zed promised to come, and Mrs. Granger's pale face flushed with surprise and delight; and we walked out, gaily chatting until we reached the gate, and passed through, leaving Zed and Mrs. Granger standing there to see us off.

"Well, the next morning, while I was

making cake and preparing poultry to broil for supper, and getting out jelly and the glass dishes for peaches and other things, Sister Tabitha put fresh flowers in the vases in the parlor, and wrote notes in my name to Simeon Petticord and Sarah, and to Mary Slocum, inviting them to come to tea that evening, and hoping they could make it convenient, as their failure to be present would be a great disappointment to Tabitha, whose stay would be but a few days. Then she put on her wraps and walked up to the village, and paid a boy to carry the notes to their respective places, that there might be no risk of having them stay in the post-office until too late for the invited ones to make arrangements to come.

"And they all came, and a delightful time we had. Sarah Petticord is always to be depended upon to help a good work along; she read at a glance our object in inviting Zed and Mrs. Granger, and no one in the world has more tact than Sarah in helping people

enjoy themselves; and Simeon, in his honest, quiet way, is excellent company too.

"I had planned to have the supper in such a state of readiness—and the table already set in the dining-room—that it took but a little while to finish it; so we women chatted in the parlor, while Philemon and Simeon and Zed walked over the place and sat in the orchard and talked. Philemon picked a splendid basket of our late peaches for each of them to take home, and Zed Granger told them more than they ever knew of the quality of the land on different farms in the neighborhood, and of the strata of sand or clay or loam on each which rendered them fit or unfit for the raising of the various seeds or fruit which the farmers, who had not made the subject a study, might try to make a success of.

"Philemon said that at times he could scarcely realize that it was Zed Granger who was visiting him for the first time since they were boys, and was so unlike what he supposed him to be—so genial and companion-

able that Philemon felt sorry and ashamed that he had so misjudged him.

"Then they came in and we had supper, which all enjoyed; and when we returned to the parlor, Sarah and Zed talked politics, and Simeon and Philemon laughed until tears stood in their eyes to hear her veer to the opposite side in order to carry on the argument; and I never knew there was any fun in politics until I heard Sarah Petticord discuss it.

"We had a charming evening, for it was difficult at times to know who were listeners, even Mrs. Granger doing her share of talking, and enjoying herself thoroughly.

"When Sarah was about to go, she gave us all a pressing invitation to come there to tea the next evening.

"'Now don't you and Mrs. Granger fail me,' said she to Zed, as she bade them good-night; 'I find I am getting rusty on politics, and if I don't talk with a good politician now and then I forget which side I am on.'

"Zed could not help joining in the laugh caused by her arch way of saying this, and he promised to go; and it was not hard to see that Mrs. Granger would have been disappointed had he refused.

"Then Mary Slocum, not to be found wanting in a good work, gave us all a cordial invitation to tea for the evening following; and as Zed could not well refuse after promising Sarah, even if he had wanted to, he said they would come, and we saw that Sister Tabitha's visit was the success she intended it to be.

"Of course we went to Sarah Petticord's the next day, and found Mr. and Mrs. Granger already there; and Simeon took Philemon and Zed over the farm, and they sat upon a log in his beautiful woods and talked, Zed bearing his share in the conversation, and listened to with the respect his opinions deserved.

"Then they walked through the orchard, and I saw them standing under the very apple-tree where I had in childhood thrown

two apples, out of each of which I had taken a bite; and an old colored woman living with the Cassimeres made me eat them, that I might, as she said, grow up a 'keerful Chrissian woman.'

"Sarah had forgotten the incident, but recalled it to memory when I mentioned it, and we laughed over other anecdotes of poor old Rosy.

"Altogether we had a beautiful visit to the old Cassimere home, and we parted with the promise of meeting the next afternoon at Mary Slocum's, which we did; and of the three visits that was the cap-sheaf. Sister Tabitha reaped what she had sown in seeing Zedekiah Granger interested in helping others; for Sarah Petticord read the missionary's letter aloud to them, and also the one Serena had written the next morning after the box was received, and no one listened more attentively than Zed—it was all so new and strange to him. And when he heard with what delight the doll had been welcomed by

the crippled child, and found that it was Mrs. Granger who sent it, he turned and looked at her with the only tender look I ever saw on his face in my whole life.

"And when it came time for us to separate we all noticed that Zed helped Mrs. Granger down the steps and offered her his arm; and as they went down the beautifully moon-lit road we looked at one another—Philemon, Tabitha, and I—and all had the hope and belief that a reign of love and peace and good will to men had commenced in the heart of Zed Granger."

CHAPTER XIII.

SARAH PETTICORD AT THE COMMITTEE MEETING.

"COME right in, Dorcas, and take a seat. I am real glad to see you, for I want to tell you about our committee meeting at Deacon Primrose's last evening, and how Sarah Petticord let the deacon express his opinions; for you know he is inclined to be censorious, although he would not knowingly say anything to injure any one.

"But he has gotten into the way of censuring folks who don't agree with his opinions, and poor little Mrs. Primrose is only an echo of what he says.

"Philemon and I haven't done laughing yet over the bewildered look he cast upon Sarah when she gave in her report, while she

sat there as sweet and cool and placid as Sarah Petticord—and you cannot go any further than that.

"Well, to begin at the beginning. You know that our church is getting too small for the congregation, or, what is nearer the case, the congregation is getting too large for the church; so we have concluded to take down the dividing-wall between it and the Sunday-school room, and throw it all into church, which would leave us without a place to hold missionary meetings and Sunday-school.

"So we held several committee meetings, and concluded to build a chapel; and several of us women of the congregation have been out collecting for it, and we are in a fair way of having a place for lectures and missionary meetings and the like; and last night we met to report.

"It was a little late when Philemon and I got there, and business began directly, Hetty Primrose, the deacon's cousin, acting as secretary.

"The first one to give in her report was Sister Slocum, and I must say it was a good one. She is a master hand at collecting, is never in a hurry, is always cheerful as a cricket, and somehow people think times are not so hard as they thought, and give to her when they won't give to anybody else.

"She took Zedekiah Granger's for her place to call; and I could scarcely believe my ears when she reported that he had promised the lumber for the building if some other neighbor would have it hauled, and he let Mrs. Granger promise a carpet for the new chapel, and we all agreed that of all surprises that was the greatest.

"Sister Slocum gave for her share the window-shades, and said she would board the carpenters free of charge, which was doing well.

"My place was Joel Hollingsworth's; and although they are Quakers and don't believe in hireling ministry, I knew that Ethel wouldn't be contributing to the missionary

society every month since the afternoon I called there and not help get us a place to meet. And I wasn't disappointed in my calculations, for all I had to do was to mention that we wanted to build a chapel, and I was on the collecting committee, and I didn't go away empty-handed by a great deal.

"Deacon Primrose gave the iron fence around the chapel, which was being built on paper, and Mrs. Primrose gave the lamps. Hetty Primrose's place was Philip Starkey's.

"'Have you asked old Zed Granger for a contribution?' inquired he.

"'Yes,' said Hetty; 'Sister Slocum called there, and he agrees to furnish lumber for the whole building.'

"Philip just stared at her, and then he said:

"'Do you mean it?'

"And she said she did.

"'Well,' said he, 'if Zed Granger promised that, it is done to spite somebody; he knows I have lumber and could give it easier than money, so he wants to cut me out.'

"'But you can give windows and doors and shutters,' said Hetty; 'we shall need them as much as the lumber.'

"So Philip agreed to give them.

"Hetty told me this after the committee meeting, and Philemon and I talked it over as we walked home; and somehow we felt that the chapel was going to help bridge over hard feelings, when two who were enemies had agreed to furnish all the wood between them.

"Well, to continue with the committee meeting. Philemon agreed to give half the chairs for the new chapel, and Simeon Petticord the other half, and to pay for the plastering; and Sarah Petticord would pay for the painting. I promised a Bible and hymn-books, and told them of David's wife writing to me to say that Dr. Dale's wife would furnish the pulpit; and others gave what they could.

"So you see we have made a first-rate beginning; for the day the corner-stone is laid we shall have a collection, and the day the chapel is dedicated another, and I shouldn't

wonder if when we have our first missionary meeting in the new chapel it will be free of debt from basement to steeple.

"Well, they had all given in their reports except Sarah Petticord, and she was just about to give in hers when Deacon Primrose remarked that the whole congregation, so far as heard from, was willing to contribute for a new chapel, except the Widow Benson.

"'Yes,' said Mrs. Primrose, 'I wasn't the one appointed to call upon her, but I saw her in a store in Dorton last evening, and asked if she intended to contribute any money toward a new chapel, and she said she couldn't see her way clear to contribute.'

"'Yes,' remarked the deacon, 'and I call that real unhandsome. She won't sell the land to build the chapel on, and she won't give any money.'

"'How do you know she won't sell the land, Cousin Richard?' questioned Hetty.

"'Because my wife sounded her about it last evening when she met her in Dorton, by

saying that a committee was intending to call upon her to ask her to sell her corner lot for the new chapel; and as far as my wife could gather from her answer, she won't sell land for church nor chapel, nor any religious purpose whatever. Did she say anything to you about it, Hetty?'

"'Not a word; I wasn't the one appointed to visit her, and did not consider it my business to question her, and shouldn't have expected an answer if I had so far forgotten courtesy as to ask her.'

"'Well,' remarked Squire Gildersleeve, whose wife is a great friend of Sister Primrose's, 'I call it downright meanness that she won't sell us that piece of land for the chapel. It is the very spot most suitable; in fact, none of the lots that have been offered us for purchase would suit anything like as well. It is near the church, and has just enough land for a small yard and forest-trees for shade. I call it flying into the face of Providence to hold on to it as she does.'

"'Yes, she ought to feel it a privilege to give toward the building of the chapel, and sell us that lot,' remarked Deacon Primrose. 'She is president of the missionary society, and the chapel is for its meetings and for the Sunday-school to which all her children go, and they attend lectures when we have them. She ought to hold up for her profession, though I haven't any call to think she would.'

"'And less for thinking she wouldn't, Cousin Richard,' said Hetty Primrose. 'Mrs. Benson always gives according to her means, and no one should do more than that. The last call was for new books for the Sunday-school library, and her contribution was far more liberal than that of many others with double her means.'

"'But it appears to me that she wouldn't be stinted any more in means by selling the lot at a fair price for the chapel. To be sure, she is business woman enough to know that if she holds on to it it might be wanted for a

bank or some other public building, and she would get three times over more than we can give for it. But yet I think it is not according to her profession not to be willing to sell it for this purpose. Deacon Benson was a public-spirited man, and always gave to the church according to his means, and the Lord prospered him; and I can't see how it is that his widow is so narrow-minded.'

"'She is far from that, Cousin Richard,' retorted Hetty Primrose. 'I boarded with her when I taught the district school, and she is anything but narrow-minded and uncharitable.'

"'Cousin Hetty always gets so excited if she don't have her own way,' remarked Sister Primrose, rocking placidly to and fro in her creaking rocking-chair. 'She can't deny that the whole Benson family dress well, and must spend considerable in that way.'

"'They always look well because they are so deft with their needles,' said Hetty, turning to her. 'Garments which less energetic people

no better off than Mrs. Benson would throw aside, she and her daughters turn and press and dye, thus freshening them that they look new.'

"'Yes, I know they are master hands at that, and for that reason they ought to have more to give for the building of the chapel,' said Sister Primrose.

"'Her daughters are away at boarding-school,' said Mrs. Gildersleeve; 'she might have saved there to help with the chapel.'

"'Yes, her daughters are preparing to be teachers,' replied Hetty, 'and Mrs. Benson is intelligent enough to know that the truest economy is to send them to the best seminary within her reach and means.'

"'Mrs. Benson raises a great deal of poultry,' continued Mrs. Gildersleeve, 'and sells pounds upon pounds of chicken; it appears to me that she might at least give some of the profit to help build the chapel. If it was myself, I would give all of it.'

"'So would I,' said Mrs. Primrose.

"'Does Cousin Richard give all the profits from his iron-works?' questioned Hetty.

"'No, Hetty,' said Sister Primrose; 'but there is a great deal of difference between the profits of the iron business and a few hens.'

"'I should say so,' remarked Hetty.

"And, Dorcas, Philemon and I have been smiling ever since at the way Sister Primrose looked puzzled as to which side Hetty was on.

"'I don't calculate that she gives more than she can help,' remarked Deacon Primrose.

"'Don't she give to all the different objects of church work whatever she agrees to give?' questioned Hetty.

"'Yes, of course she does,' said Squire Gildersleeve; 'she does what she promises, but that is no more than her duty.'

"'Does she ever neglect to give on Sundays for the current expenses of the church? You are one of the collectors and should know,' said Hetty, turning to him.

"'Now I am called upon to think of it, I believe she does always give,' said he; 'but

that don't excuse her from helping to build the chapel, which she would have as much use of as any of us would.'

"'I have heard that she is a master hand at setting a good table,' remarked Sister Primrose; 'she might save there to help give to benevolent objects.'

"'She does give good board,' replied Hetty; 'but if you were boarding there, would you consider that it was her duty to stint in quantity and quality, that what was saved might be given to charitable objects?'

"'Well, that is neither here nor there,' interrupted Deacon Primrose. 'If I were Mrs. Benson, it seems to me I could see my way clear to give *something* toward helping along with the chapel. But my wife asked her if she wasn't going to contribute to the building of it, and understood her to say that she could not afford to give money or materials. If she would give the fastenings for the shutters, or a lock for the door, or the putty, even, it would be something; but to give nothing to-

ward the chapel is certainly narrow-minded and unhandsome.'

"'If she said she could not afford it you should believe her,' said Hetty Primrose; 'Mrs. Benson would tell nothing but the exact truth.'

"'It is well she has such a great friend to take her part,' remarked Sister Primrose; 'but I don't see that there is any call to get angry over it.'

"'I am not angry, but I like justice, and I don't consider that you are just to Mrs. Benson; for if she feels she cannot give toward the building of a chapel, I know her well enough to be certain that it is more of a cross to her to withhold her help than it is to you not to receive it.'

"'Maybe she does do the best she can,' remarked Squire Gildersleeve; 'I for one don't wish to blame her for what she can't help.'

"'Mrs. Benson's benefactions are known only to herself and family,' said Hetty Prim-

rose, 'and are not confined to church nor sect. She would scorn to be held by narrow-minded restrictions, but, in every way that God points out, gives to the poor and afflicted, and, what is more, does not proclaim her benevolence from the housetops. Of the good she does I could tell you numberless instances; many a simple pleasure she denies herself, that she may give to the poor and afflicted.'

"'Well,' said Deacon Primrose, dryly, 'I suppose we must take the will for the deed, and let somebody else be asked to contribute, to make up for what she refuses to give. Let me see—are all the reports in?'

"'You haven't had mine,' said Sarah Petticord, speaking for the first time.

"'Well, Mrs. Petticord,' said the deacon, 'give in your report, and Hetty can write it down if her ruffled feelings will let her.' And he looked around at the rest of us and smiled a not very amiable smile.

"'I had but one place to call,' said Sarah Petticord, 'and that was to see Mrs. Benson

and ask her for a contribution. She gives as her share the corner lot which the committee wish to buy, and will have the deed made out according to law.'

"Well, Dorcas, you might have heard a pin drop; there wasn't a word said for a long time, and at last Sister Primrose was roused up to defend herself, as it were.

"'Why, she said she wouldn't sell land for church nor chapel, nor any religious purpose whatever,' said she, reddening like a cabbage-rose.

"'Nor is she doing it now,' replied Sarah Petticord; 'she is giving it fully and freely as her contribution.'

"'Gives it! Well, I never!' said the deacon, like one dazed; while Squire Gilder-sleeve and his wife seemed to be reflecting, and trying to call to mind what they had said of Sister Benson.

"As Philemon and I walked home we couldn't help laughing over the way the deacon looked, and how the whole company

kept glancing at him and Sister Primrose and at Squire Gildersleeve and his wife.

"When we were sitting by the lamp, Philemon said, 'Matilda.'

"Said I, 'Well?'

"'The deacon made a mistake—that is certain. It is the easiest thing in the world to be mistaken, Matilda; you found that out the time you claimed the speckled hen.'

"Now, Dorcas, that speckled-hen affair has been a standing joke with Philemon ever since it happened, and I will tell you how it came about. The day that I called to see Ethel Hollingsworth and she agreed to become a contributing member of our missionary society, while she was cutting the roses for me a flock of chickens came by the porch, and I could not help saying that they were the prettiest I ever saw; for they were so curiously marked: they were a beautiful brown, with every feather tipped with white, and had full topknots.

"'Well, Friend Matilda,' said Ethel, 'thee

shall have one of those speckled hens as a memento of thy first call to see me.'

"And sure enough, that very evening one of their people came over with a speckled hen; and I had all ready to send back by him a pot of my Easter lilies, for I knew nothing would please Ethel more.

"I never had anything that I set more store by than that speckled hen—she was such a beauty.

"One afternoon I had just taken my knitting to sit in the shaded porch, when I heard a great fluttering and cackling and tramping, and went to see what was the matter; and what should I see but a woman running wildly about my beautiful yard, grabbing for my speckled hen in real earnest; and before I could stop her she caught it.

"'Oh,' said I, 'just see what you have done—trampled down grass and flowers to catch my hen.'

"'Faix, an' it's not your hen,' said she, her face as red as fire with her stooping and

GRABBING FOR MY SPECKLED HEN. (Page 264.)

scrambling about; 'it's mine, an' I'm bound to have her.'

"'Your hen?' said I, in astonishment. 'Indeed it is not, and you shall not take her; it was given to me by a friend, and is the only one I have that is so curiously marked.'

"'If it's the last word I have to spake, ma'am,' said she, 'it's my little Tim's hen; it flied out of his arms as we was goin' past here in the wagon; yonder it is on the hill, waiting for me. We are moving, ma'am.'

"I looked up the road, and sure enough, there was a wagon, and a boy was looking from it.

"'Well,' said I, trying to calm my feelings, 'the speckled hen is mine, but I will not quarrel about a chicken; you can take her.'

"'I mean to take her,' said she, 'for I am taking nothing but my own. It's sorry I am that you want to claim her, but it would break the heart of little Tim to part with her; she is the only pet he has.'

"Well, she had reached the gate with the

speckled hen, when she turned to me, her eyes sparkling with joy, and said she:

"'There is your speckled hen coming around the corner of the house.'

"And sure enough, there she was; and when we looked at them together we couldn't have told, to save our lives, which was Tim's and which was mine.

"'Well,' said I, 'I am real glad; but I really was sure it was mine, because it is the only one I ever saw like it except at Joel Hollingsworth's.'

"'And sure,' said she, 'it was Miss Ethel—bless her sweet face—that gave little Tim the eggs; and when they hatched, the chickens were white except this one, and little Tim claimed it.'

"So we shook hands and parted; she went up the hill to Tim, and I sat down again in the porch to my knitting.

"'Matilda Atheling,' said I to myself, 'maybe it would be quite as well not to be so sure you are the only one who could be

in the right the next time you are called upon to express an opinion, for it is the easiest thing in nature to be mistaken.'

"But it has done Philemon so much good that I am really glad it happened."

CHAPTER XIV.

SISTER TABITHA'S TEMPERANCE MISSIONARY.

"GOOD-EVENING, Dorcas. I have brought my knitting, and will stay with you until Philemon calls for me on his way from the church council, which meets at the parsonage this evening.

"I have been wanting to see you again ever since Sister Tabitha left us, to tell you some of the new and stirring things she told us when we were sitting about our parlor fire. We have not been at a loss since for subjects to think and talk about; and I said to Philemon this morning at breakfast that a visitor like his sister was a blessing for which folks couldn't be too thankful.

"Well, what I have in mind to tell you is something that Philemon and I cannot get out of our minds, and don't want to; and

knowing you are a great temperance woman and will make good use of the story—which is as true as preaching—I want to tell you, so you can pass it on, maybe among the young people under your care.

"You see, Sister Tabitha's husband had a cousin named Helen Atherton—a sweet, pretty girl, who had learning and accomplishments, and became a great belle in society. When her parents died, her mother's brother, Dr. Wagner, took her to his home, and she was as his own daughter. He was a widower, and there was no company most of the time for Helen; but she was as contented as could be in the elegant home managed by the good housekeeper and the faithful old servants.

"She wasn't there but a few months when her uncle fell ill, and a trained nurse was brought from the hospital to wait upon him.

"One day, when Helen was sitting by his bedside, he said:

"'Helen, I sha'n't get well, and while I am able to talk I must tell you my plans for you.'

"The nurse was going to leave the room, but he made a sign for her to stay.

"'Helen,' said he, 'I have made my will, and have left all my property to you on condition that you remain unmarried, or unite yourself in marriage only with one who is a total abstainer from all intoxicating drinks. If you fail to comply with these conditions, the property will be divided among distant relatives whom I have never seen. I wish you now to promise me that you will receive attentions from no young man whom you know, or even suspect, touches the wine-cup.'

"Helen promised, and Dr. Wagner thanked her for giving him that comfort.

"'I was afraid you would think me too exacting,' said he; 'but it is only my love for my only sister's only child that prompts me to try to save you from a life of misery. O Helen, in my long years of practice among all classes of people, I have seen so much anguish from the use of intoxicating drink

that I shudder to think what may be your fate. There is no creature on this broad earth so forlorn, so helpless, so pitiable, as a wife, mother, sister, or daughter at the mercy of a drunkard. For, Helen, neither law nor society protects such unfortunate women; and many as lovely and loving as you have suffered abuse, and even death, at the hands of those who promised to cherish and protect them.'

"Well, Helen promised again, and then her uncle told her that he had appointed his friend Dr. Fortescue as her guardian, and she was to live in his family until she was of age, and then could choose a home for herself.

"So when her uncle died she went home with Mrs. Fortescue, who was rejoiced to have her; for she had no daughter, and Helen would be pleasant company for her only son, who would soon come home from Europe, where he had been graduated as a doctor; and she knew that a young girl in the house would make it more cheerful for him.

"Well, young Dr. Hartley came home, and his stepfather—Dr. Fortescue—took him into partnership with him, and they were all happy and glad; for he was a fine, handsome young man, and a great favorite in society. The next year Helen went into society, and he was her escort whenever he could leave his patients, which was not very often; for he was liked by everybody, and had a large practice.

"About the end of the second year Helen was engaged to be married to him, and the time was set for the wedding, and Mrs. Fortescue made great preparations for a grand reception, and the young couple were to go to Europe upon their wedding-journey. But all through that summer and fall Dr. Hartley didn't seem like himself. He didn't get up until the middle of the forenoon sometimes, and was cross, and hadn't any appetite; and his mother said he was working too hard, and longed for the time to come for his trip across the sea.

"The invitations were out, and Helen's

beautiful wedding-dress all ready, when Dr. Hartley fell ill; and Helen advised his mother to send for Sister Marjorie, the nurse who had waited upon her uncle.

"When she came, the minute she set eyes on the young man she knew what was the trouble; but she didn't say anything, but attended to him faithfully.

"That night she went to the basement for ice, and when she came back he was deathly sick.

"'Dr. Hartley,' said she, 'you are killing yourself with strong drink, and are now on the verge of delirium tremens.'

"'Since when did it become the business of attendants to lecture their employers?' asked he, in a haughty tone.

"'I consider it the duty of even attendants to try to keep any one from ruin,' said she; 'it is in my capacity as nurse that I warn you.'

"'You forget yourself,' said he, 'and I for one will thank you to attend to your own affairs.'

"'No, Dr. Hartley, I don't forget; nor do others forget that Miss Helen must give up her property if she marries a drunkard, and that is what you are. You drink only at night, and that is why your poor mother and Miss Helen do not suspect you. They must be told the truth.'

"'If you don't promise me to keep it a secret from Helen you shall not leave this room alive,' said he. And he rose from the bed and tried to steady himself upon his feet.

"'Lie down this minute,' said Sister Marjorie, sternly, 'before you fall, and I have to call somebody to help me lift you.'

"Just as this was said they looked around, and his mother was standing in the door; and she came in with a face as white as if she were dead, and sank upon her knees by the bed, upon which he had fallen.

"'O my son, my only boy,' said she, trembling and faint, 'tell me that this terrible thing is not true.'

"'Now, mother,' said he, in a stupid way, 'don't worry about me; I am all right.'

"'O Ralph, how could you bring this terrible anguish upon me, and upon that sweet girl who so loves and trusts you! Oh, the chance for happiness you have trampled under your feet!—for she will never marry you.'

"'Oh yes, she will, never fear; I will soon be over this spell, and will be a credit to you. I am only nervous and can't sleep—that is all.'

"'Tell me where you keep the wretched stuff,' said his mother, 'that I may remove the temptation out of your reach.'

"'He keeps it in the corner of the clothes-press,' said the nurse, 'and every time I leave the room he drinks.'

"His mother went to the clothes-press to take out the bottles.

"'Let them alone!' he yelled; and taking up a cut-glass goblet, he hurled it at her. It missed her, but she fell fainting to the floor; and the nurse half lifted, half dragged her to

her room, and stayed by her till she came to herself.

"'I shall have to tell Helen! I shall have to tell Helen! She must know that my idolized boy is a drunkard,' she moaned; and you may imagine what it cost her to say this about her only son.

"Well, the nurse went back to the sick-room; and during the time she was out the poor miserable creature had taken another drink, and was too sick to know or care that his mother was suffering for his sake.

"When morning came, Mrs. Fortescue had to take her place at the breakfast-table, where her white face frightened Helen.

"'O Mrs. Fortescue,' said she, 'I know that Ralph is very ill, and you are keeping it from me. I must see for myself how he is.' And she rose from the table.

"'No, dear, he is no worse than usual; I would not go up now. The nurse will soon be down to her breakfast, and we will ask her what time will be better to go up.'

"She had scarcely said this when the nurse was heard coming down the stairs; and Helen met her at the door, and asked if it were a suitable time to go to the sick-room.

"'As suitable as any, Miss Helen,' said the nurse, hesitatingly, and looked toward Mrs. Fortescue, who, seeing it could be put off no longer, rose to go with her.

"Dr. Hartley had taken another drink the moment the nurse was out of the room, and was deathly sick. The sight of him, the odor of the room, and the empty bottle which he was too intoxicated to hide, told the whole story; and Helen sank into the nearest chair, too weak to stand.

"'How dare you bring her here, mother? You only did it to humiliate me; I wish I had killed you.' And he grasped the empty bottle to throw at her; but the nurse wrenched it from his hand; and, too wretched for tears, Helen, white and trembling, followed his mother from the room.

"'Our friends must be notified that there

will be no wedding here,' said she; 'our engagement is broken.'

"'O Helen,' said Mrs. Fortescue, throwing herself upon her knees before her, 'don't cast my boy off!—it is too cruel. It will drive him to despair, and he will go down to ruin. What is the keeping of a fortune in comparison with the loss of a soul? He will reform—I know he will—if you will only be his wife.'

"'I will not risk it, even if poor uncle's dying request did not bar the way,' said Helen; 'there will be no wedding here.'

"'But oh, Helen, your influence as a good wife would save him.'

"'If his love for me and knowledge of my promise to uncle has no power, my influence as a wife would be useless,' said Helen. 'My heart aches for you—for us all; but I will marry no one who is not a total abstainer.'

"So word was sent to all who had invitations, and Helen put away her pretty dresses, and nothing was said at home or abroad about it. When Dr. Ralph got over that ill-

ness he pleaded with her to have faith in his word that he would never touch another drop of liquor; and she encouraged him all she could to keep out of temptation, but would not say she would marry him.

"Two years passed away, and Dr. Ralph hadn't touched a drop of strong drink, and was the same skilful physician, and popular with all. He had joined a temperance society, taken a vow to 'touch not, taste not, handle not,' and had kept it. That winter there was a revival in their church, and he was one of the converts. Then Helen did begin to have faith that he was really reformed, and promised to marry him the week after he joined the church. His mother's heart was filled with joy, and she would have made preparations for a grand wedding, but Helen said she did not wish it.

"'Gaiety belongs to the past,' said she; 'I wish no one invited except our dear old pastor and his wife, and Cousin Tabitha.' And thus it was agreed upon and decided.

"In the meantime Dr. Fortescue had something upon his mind. He was an elder in the church; they used fermented wine, and he had never given the subject much thought. But now it was coming home to him, and he saw the danger of it as he never saw it before, and determined to make an effort to do away with it, and use in its place the unfermented juice of the grape. He had a talk with the five other elders, separately and together, and only two could be persuaded to come over to his way of thinking. He must have one more, and left no means untried to get him. But it was no use to plead; they were joined to their idol of custom, and wanted no change.

"There was one little man among them who always followed where the others led; but that time he took a stand against all Dr. Fortescue's persuasion, who went the very evening before communion to make one more effort.

"'It is a terrible temptation, brother, in

the way of our young men,' said he, after using all texts to prove that the use of unfermented wine was not against Scripture. 'If you had a son I am sure you would not be willing to have him so tempted.'

"'To my mind it is sacrilegious to believe that a sip of communion-wine could be looked upon as a temptation,' replied the elder.

"'But, brother,' said Dr. Fortescue, 'it is perhaps no temptation to you or to me or to many others; but we should have compassion upon those who are weak in that respect, remembering the injunction "that no man put a stumbling-block or an occasion to fall in his brother's way."'

"'A person so weak as that would not be safe anywhere,' remarked the other, dryly.

"'I believe that the use of fermented wine keeps many out of the church,' persisted Dr. Fortescue. 'Those who have taken the vow of total abstinence cannot conscientiously take our fermented communion-wine.'

"'I agree with the others that it is better

to make no change. I am very conservative in my opinions.'

"Well, Dorcas, the time was wasted arguing with him. Dr. Fortescue could not win him over and thus have a majority, and the fermented wine was used; and he saw with a sinking heart the gleam which came into the eyes of Dr. Ralph when its fumes reached him, and knew that the demon of the wine-cup had triumphed and was rejoicing over the broken pledge.

"That evening Dr. Ralph got brandy at a drug-store, and spent the night in beastly intoxication; and none can tell the anguish of Mrs. Fortescue and Helen. The engagement was again broken, and Helen, who felt she could remain no longer with the Fortescues, went to stay for a time with Sister Tabitha; and she could not have gone to a more helpful friend.

"We know the way to increase the good in the world is to lessen the evil; and although

Sister Tabitha did not say so, Philemon and I knew by many things she told us that she does all the good she can in the fashionable circle where her money places her. She is one who thinks that a Christian should not point to the cross with a frown on the face, and in her happy, cheery way she leads people to Christ.

"Through her influence many of her wealthy friends stopped putting wine on their tables, and in this way, at least, temptation was not placed in the way of young men.

"'Help me to use my inheritance to assist inebriates to reform, if such a thing be possible,' said Helen to Sister Tabitha; 'I wish to devote the rest of my life to that work.'

"'Indeed it is possible,' said Sister Tabitha. And she told of the new treatment through which the poor victim of rum would lose all taste for the deadly poison. She gave Helen instances which had come under her own notice of noble, gifted, useful men who, under

the dominion of the demon of strong drink, had lost the power and wish to reform, and there seemed nothing for them but a drunkard's grave. But some good Samaritan had taken them in hand, and had aided them to receive treatment at one of these institutions, where they had lost all love for strong drink, and had become again honored and useful citizens, only those who have suffered as they and their families had suffered knowing the joy of their great deliverance.

"So Sister Tabitha encouraged her in every way. A large house with spacious grounds was bought by them, and in a short time was ready for patients—among the first being Dr. Ralph Hartley.

"And, under that blessed treatment, he is cured—all love for strong drink is gone. He and Helen were married, and are making the reforming of the drunkard their life-work. In the garb of a deaconess Helen searches the by-ways for the tempted, the fallen, the almost hopeless victim of the rum demon, and is

truly what Sister Tabitha aided her to be—a missionary of temperance.

"And now, Dorcas, I hear Philemon's step on the porch, so I will roll up my knitting and go home. Come to see me soon; come the very first evening you can spare."

CHAPTER XV.

MRS. ATHELING'S CHINESE MISSIONARY.

"Ah, there you are, Dorcas! I was almost sure we would meet at this first lecture in our new chapel, and am glad we came early, that we may have a good talk before the people come. Just think! it is finished and paid for, and I believe no one misses what they gave, because it was given to the Lord. The carpet which Mrs. Granger contributed is good and pretty, and we are all to meet here on Saturday to make it, and hope you will be with us.

"And, Dorcas, I have a grand piece of news to tell you: Mr. and Mrs. Starkey are going to join the church, and Mrs. Starkey says that the missionary's letter of thanks to her husband was the awakening cause. And Mrs. Starkey has joined our missionary society.

"And now I must tell you of our visit to David's. We went to lots of places, but what I enjoyed most was the Chinese Sunday-school and a missionary meeting where the subject was China and the Chinese.

"You see, for some time I have been thinking often of those poor creatures, and one evening I was knitting and thinking about them, and Philemon was reading. After a while he laid his paper down and began paring an apple, throwing the parings into the fire.

"'Philemon!' said I.

"'Well?' said he.

"'I wish I could do something to help the poor creatures they call Celestials,' said I. 'If I could write for the papers, and editors would publish what I wrote, I could certainly help them.'

"'Now, Matilda,' said Philemon, 'you had better let those Celestials alone. It is a very unpopular subject, Matilda—very unpopular; and if you wish to make yourself unpopular, just you write or speak in favor of the Chinese.'

"'O Philemon,' said I, 'women have no vote; they can say what they please; people don't pay any attention to them.'

"'But I thought you wanted them to mind what you put in the papers,' remarked Philemon, reaching for another apple.

"'I want them to mind the Chinese,' said I, 'but they needn't pay any attention to me. I am not running for office, so what need I care whether I am unpopular or not?'

"'Well, then,' said he, 'what is it you are trying to get at?'

"'Why,' said I, 'I want to see the poor creatures Christianized; I am not talking from a political, but from a missionary point of view. The Chinese are as much heathen and worshipers of idols as those on "Greenland's icy mountain" or "India's coral strand," and it is our bounden duty to help them to worship the true God.'

"'Yes; but, Matilda,' said he, 'it is far more popular to send one man out there, at big expense, to convert the millions of China-

men than it is to have a whole kit of them come here and be Christianized in a heap, and learn our ways and customs, and go back and Christianize their people. This is rather a quicker process, Matilda, but the lone missionary at big expense is far more popular.'

"'But, Philemon,' said I, 'why isn't it popular to want them to come? Hasn't it been our boast that our free and glorious country is to be considered a refuge for those who choose to come?'

"'Yes,' replied Philemon; 'but those generous things were said before the Chinese were enlightened enough to want to come. We never mistrusted they would be, nor would they have been had it not been for the lone missionary. We had calculated only for Irish and Germans and an organ-grinder now and again, but never mistrusted that a horde of yellow Jacks would flock here and take the bread out of the Irishman's and German's and organ-grinder's mouths.'

"'They can't take out what isn't there,

Philemon,' said I; 'and as I am not running for office, I mean to say that they have just as much right to scramble for a living as have any of the people who come. Haven't they, Philemon?'

"'Yes, I reckon so, Matilda; but it is an unpopular subject—very.'

"'But, Philemon,' said I, 'David says the poor creatures are so harmless; they attend strictly to their own business, and would never make a disturbance if they weren't worried and taunted into doing what gets them into trouble. They can't go on the streets that the boys don't hollo "Rats!" at them and run up behind them and pull their cues. One of them who had been converted to Christianity said the boys made him sin in getting angry, and that was his great trouble in this land of the free and home of the brave.'

"'But, Matilda,' said Philemon, '"the land of the free" calculated that all who come would identify themselves with us, and be-

come citizens and vote. The Chinamen don't do that; they come here only to make money, take it back to China, and that is the last we see of our money. To be sure, they earn it, but we don't want them to have it.'

"'Well, Philemon,' said I, 'do our people identify themselves with the Celestials when they go to China? Do they marry Chinese girls and settle down there to stay, and eat with chop-sticks and worship idols, and let their hair grow into cues, and give all the money back that they have earned when they leave?'

"'No,' says Philemon, 'I don't know as they do; but, Matilda, we've got to make laws to keep them out, or the country would be overrun. That is what some of our lawmakers say.'

"'Overrun, Philemon,' said I, 'when there are thousands upon thousands of acres of land waiting and begging for people to settle on them! Why can't they let the poor crowded creatures come—that can live on next to nothing—and teach them that people

need something besides clean clothes, by encouraging them to learn trades and farming, and then colonize them and help them to get settled in these new countries, and build flourishing cities where there are now howling wildernesses?'

"'But, Matilda, that is just the trouble; they don't want to go into howling wildernesses and wait while cities are getting built. They want to cluster in them that's already built, open their laundries, make their five hundred dollars, and go home to be rich men all the rest of their lives.'

"'Well, then,' said I, 'let them settle where they can make it the quickest, and go back and take with them the knowledge of our Saviour, and our better way of living, our manners and customs, and civilized ways of earning our support, and let others come and take their places.'

"'But, Matilda, what is to be done with our own people whom they crowd out, and the Irish and Germans and organ-grinders?'

"'Why, they, having knowledge of building and farming and trades and cattle-raising, would be the very ones to go out to the new countries and improve land and build cities. And see what a help it would be to our nation to have all that outlying land improved.'

"'Yes,' said Philemon, 'it does seem hard to keep the poor creatures in darkness and away from gospel privileges when the work of Christianizing them could be done by wholesale if they were allowed to come, besides teaching them to live in a civilized way. But those who make the laws know what is best, I reckon.' And he picked up his paper and went to reading.

"Well, Dorcas, as I said before, we went to town. And on Sunday we went to the Chinese Sunday-school, and it was an interesting sight, and, I must say, pathetic, to see full-grown men poring over their books, trying to learn the Christian's language and belief. All were well dressed, their cues twisted around their heads (to keep them out of the reach of the

street-boys, I reckon), and their collars and stockings white as snow.

"And I thought it wouldn't be very easy to find as large a number of our young men in the same station of life who would be as quiet and studious and well bred as these poor heathen.

"One of the teachers was a missionary's daughter. She was born in China, and had lived there twenty-seven years; and she said that she had never in all that time received anything but kindness and politeness from the Celestials, and it made her heart ache to see how they are treated here in a Christian land. She understood and spoke their language as well as they did, and they came to her from all parts of the city to tell her their troubles and to get her to speak for them when they couldn't make themselves understood.

"In the evening we went to a young men's Bible class where they were all Chinamen, and where a policeman had to stand before

the door to keep our youth from going in to break up the meeting, and to protect the Chinamen from being maltreated when they were going in and out.

"One of the poor creatures there was in trouble because his brother—nothing but a boy—had been sent to the House of Correction for a whole year, accused of drawing a knife upon a customer who disputed about the change due him. The court didn't prove that the knife was drawn, and the woman where they boarded said she didn't believe it, for they were as honest as the day, and peaceable as lambs; and the only reason that I can see why he was sent to the House of Correction and the customer was allowed to go free was that the Celestial was not a voter and the customer was.

"So there the poor boy had to stay, separated from his brother, and a stranger in a strange land.

"His Sunday-school teacher asked the minister to intercede for him, but he could not get

him out of the House of Correction, though he did get them to spare his cue from being cut off, and got them to allow him rice, which he longed for.

"Well, when we got back to David's I couldn't help but speak of the nice appearance of the Celestials, their neat clothes and quiet, polite behavior; and I added that there wasn't a smell of whisky or tobacco on any of them, so far as I could smell.

"'They do say the Chinese use opium,' said Philemon; 'but I have no right to accuse them of it, for I don't know anything about them.'

"'Yes, father,' said David, 'they do use opium; but when we remember that it was a Christian nation that forced China, at the point of the bayonet, to repeal its ancient law of death for all opium-smokers, and to permit the deadly drug to be scattered broadcast over the country, it looks a little inconsistent in us to berate the Chinese so savagely and punish them so severely when they are caught at running opium dens. Not but

what they should be made to obey our laws, and be punished when they transgress them; but as it was a Christian nation that forced them into this evil, we, as a Christian nation, should show them their error in a Christian spirit, and not in a spirit of revenge because they are here and we don't want them.'

"'Yes,' remarked Philemon, 'it is rather narrow-minded in us to make such a parade over a raid against a Chinese opium or gambling den where the Celestials are being made only a little more degraded than they were before, when we are letting our people send thousands of gallons of whisky to Africa and other heathen countries. If that isn't straining at a gnat and swallowing a camel I don't know what is.'

"Well, the next day David's wife took me to the missionary meeting, and I was glad to find that they were discussing the question of sending a missionary to China. And one lady said that she reckoned that until 'every land and nation had heard Messiah's name' the

old objection would come up as to whether it were worth while to tax ourselves to send missionaries to the heathen, because they would be saved without our help if God willed it.

"'But,' continued she, 'it is not so much the question as to whether the heathen can be saved without the gospel as whether we ourselves can be saved if we fail to present it to them.'

"Well, they decided that afternoon to send the missionary, and then the question was as to what style of person to send. After a lot of pros and cons they decided that they wanted a girl not under eighteen years of age; she must be willing to learn the Chinese language, so that no time need be taken up after she reached there in learning it; she must be healthy, with a sound, well-disciplined mind, habits of thought and study, a good education, power of adaptation to new circumstances, cheerful and patient in disposition, and, above and beyond all, with a heart

singly and steadfastly devoted to the Saviour and His work upon earth.

"'If such a person can be found,' said the president, 'I am sure Mrs. Hudson will agree to teach her the Chinese language.'

"'Yes,' said she, 'it would be a great pleasure to me, and I am ready to commence it at any time.'

"Then the question came up how long it would take to learn the language, and how much money could be collected in the treasury by that time; and Mrs. Dale said if more money was needed when the time came she would supply it.

"Then the president suggested that all the ladies would consider within themselves who among their young-lady acquaintances might be willing to go; but all shook their heads, and said so far as they knew at that time there was not one.

"Then the president said we would make it a subject of prayer, and no doubt the right one would be found. And she said, 'Let us

pray;' and she offered the petition that if it were the Father's will, such a person might be found.

"Well, Dorcas, I never was more interested in my life; and all the time of the discussion I kept thinking to myself, 'Gerty is the very girl they have need of. She has all the qualities they mention, and more; for she has no relations to grieve after her and hinder her except her father, and he is going to marry and won't miss her enough to refuse to let her go. She is not eighteen, but will be by the time she learns the language, although she is quick at learning, for she picked up German, and reads and speaks it, without taking one lesson from a teacher.'

"I knew it was not my missionary meeting, and that I maybe had no right to have a say; but the president had said for all the ladies present to consider the matter, so I spoke up.

"'Sisters,' said I, 'there is a young girl of my acquaintance who is all that you say you need in a missionary. She loves teaching, and has for years longed to be a missionary.

I am sure she will learn the language as quickly as any one you will find—at least, she learned to speak German without having anybody to tell her a word, but got it all from books. If you are willing to speak to her of it, I will tell her that she may call to see you.'

"As soon as I had finished speaking, Mrs. Dale turned to me, and said she:

"'It is Gerty you are alluding to, Sister Atheling; I am sure it is.'

"'Yes,' said I, 'it is Gerty.'

"'Yes, sisters,' said she, 'I am well acquainted also with the young lady of whom Sister Atheling speaks; and if she be willing to go, I am sure you cannot be better suited.'

"Well, they were all delighted that the subject was thus far on the way; and then we parted, and I went back with David's wife.

"On my way there, I couldn't help saying to myself, 'Now, Matilda Atheling, I hope you haven't been talking too fast and making Gerty out smarter about learning than she is.' So I made up my mind to ask her

how she came to take up the study of German, and why she wanted to learn it without the help of a teacher. I thought I would listen to her account of it, and then tell her why I asked.

"As good luck would have it, a lady had called to see David's wife; so I just passed up to the nursery, and found Gerty sitting by the window reading, and little Philemon asleep in his crib.

"'Gerty,' said I, as I took a rocking-chair, 'you told me once when I was here about your picking up German; I don't remember all you said, so I would like to hear it again.'

"'Well, dear Mrs. Atheling, you shall hear it,' said she, smilingly, 'for it is something that has given me such pleasure that I love to speak of it.'

"'But why did you happen to select German in preference to any other language, Gerty?' said I.

"'The only reason that I am aware of is that the first foreigners I had ever seen were

Germans. One was an intelligent, educated gentleman, a music-teacher, who gave me music-lessons when I was a child, at our home in the country; the other was our gardener, a pious old man. And when the two happened to meet, my delight was unbounded at hearing them converse in a tongue unknown to me. In my opinion, persons who could speak in two languages were beings worthy of profound respect and admiration; but it never occurred to me for years after that a language could be learned from books.'

"'But, Gerty, couldn't you have learned it from one or both of the Germans who came to your father's house?'

"'I suppose I could; but I had never mentioned my longing to learn to either of my parents, looking upon it as something impossible.'

"'But after you came to the city you could have taken lessons from a German teacher, couldn't you?'

"'No; papa lost all his money while we

were in the country, through indorsing for a friend and the failure of a bank; and after we came here we got poorer and poorer—for papa could not get into business—and mother died, and I was trying to keep house without knowing anything about it—for we had plenty of servants in our old home. Then, dear Mrs. Atheling, after I found such a good home here, I had so many other branches to learn when I was in school that German was for a time put out of my thoughts.

"'At length, at the beginning of one vacation, happening to look over a list of school-books, I noticed "Oehlschlager's Pronouncing German Reader"; and no time was lost in getting one, and also a dictionary of that language.

"'Now that papa was keeping me well supplied with money it would have been very easy to obtain a teacher; but my ambition was to read and translate German, to pronounce it correctly, and, as a test of capability in that line, to accomplish it without a teacher.

"'With books in hand I set to work with enthusiasm; and for your benefit, dear Mrs. Atheling, if you have never seen the reader, I will quote the first sentence of the preface:

"'"That the learning of a language is a task—a tedious and difficult task—will be admitted by those who have learned and those who have taught languages."

"'This remark did not daunt me in the least, for I have faith in the axiom, "What man has done man can do"; and if it had done so, ample balm would have been found in a paragraph farther on, which I will also quote:

"'"Too much stress has always been laid upon what is called the grammar of a language. I have always been of the opinion—and twenty years of professional practice have confirmed the opinion—that to read and understand a language requires a very slender knowledge of special grammar."

"'Now all this suited me exactly, for it was a pet theory of mine that if one understood

the grammar of her own language pretty well, she could make it available for every other without drudging with the grammar of that particular language. So, fortified with a good supply of self-confidence, I set to work upon my first fable, which was entitled "Das Rotkehlchen." On turning to the glossary at the back of the reader I found that *Das Rotkehlchen* meant "the little redbreast."

"'"Well," thought I, "it would be a pity indeed if such a small affair as a robin could conquer a girl of my size." So I cheerily awaited developments; and, dear Mrs. Athel-ing, if my mind had been a sieve, the sound of the words of that first line, as pronounced underneath it, could not have slipped through easier and left less impression, except of blank dismay at my dullness, of which I had never before been conscious.

"'For three days I picked up the book at odd times and conned over my three lines—the limit which I had given myself—and at the end of that time I may say truly that it

was the only thing that I ever undertook that I had even a passing thought of giving up.'

"'Well, you must like hard study, Gerty, or you would have been discouraged.'

"'Yes, I love study; and my dear mother taught me to gain any branch of knowledge I could, for it always comes in use; and I have certainly found it the case with German. But with all my desire to conquer obstacles, my memory proved faithless when I tried to put sound and meaning together, although, thanks to the glossary, I knew the meaning of the words. It was discouraging, but I would not give it up; and one afternoon we had a call from the pastor of our church to meet at the parsonage to organize the missionary meeting you attended this afternoon. In canvassing ways and means the pastor quoted an old German proverb: "*Aller Anfang ist schwer*," to which a lady responded, "*Ja, das ist wahr.*"

"'"What did he say?" questioned I at the first opportunity.

"'"He said, 'Every beginning is difficult.'"

"'"What did you say in reply?" was my next move in the pursuit of knowledge.

"'"I said, 'Yes, that is true.'"

"'"Well," thought I, "there are several other things besides the organizing of missionary meetings to which this will apply, and, if I am not mistaken, 'German without a master' heads the list." But in spite of all discouragements I determined to persevere.

"'*Das Rotkehlchen* and I had been through legions of skirmishes, in which he sometimes came off victorious and sometimes I had what I called an advantage; but it was all of six weeks before I would trust myself to read my first fable to a live German.

"'As you know, dear Mrs. Atheling, there is a German family a few doors from us, who are good friends and neighbors; and it was in their benign presence that I resolved to launch my small craft, which I feared was not quite seaworthy. So one evening I summoned cou-

rage, took my reader, and went to pass an hour or so with them.

"'I will always remember the charming little parlor where the family pass their evenings; the kind old father in robe and slippers; the smiling *Hausmutter*, knitting in hand; the blooming daughter, the light of the happy home; the canary hopping about in its cage; the parrot inviting me in cordial tones to "take a seat by the fire"; and the exuberant joy of the two little dogs, "Nellchen" and "Happy" —the latter a born German, who cannot understand a word of English, but can perform any number of antics in Dutch.

"'After we had chatted awhile I drew my reader forth, and told them I would read something. My satisfaction was complete when I found that they not only understood every word, but said my accent was very good indeed; and one of the pleasures of my pleasant life is to read aloud in German to my good German neighbors.

"'I have, however, noticed that no matter

how treacherous my memory has proved when I tried to press a refractory word upon its acceptance, it never forgets the most trifling hint given it by my good neighbors; from which I infer that one could learn much more easily and quickly with the aid of a teacher. Of course this is not, perhaps, a fair test, as I never devoted sixty consecutive minutes to it since I began, but only odds and ends of time, as I never intended it to interfere with my other studies or music, but considered it only in the light of a recreation.

"'Because I had mastered one fable you must not suppose that ever afterward I sailed along without difficulty. No indeed; every fable contained words which were in no other; but though each one was more difficult than that preceding it, I believe it was a hair's-breadth easier to learn.

"'Having read the reader from preface to finis, my next undertaking was to read the Bible in German; so I purchased one in that language. My rule was to take down words

in each chapter that were new to me, find their meaning in the dictionary, and write them upon a slip of paper, placing it where I could glance over it occasionally. In this way I have read it through; some chapters required no help from the dictionary.

"'Of course, knowing the meaning of most words, I can carry on an understandable, though somewhat jerky, conversation; and if I sometimes get "the cart before the horse," I give myself a mental shake and say, "Serves you right for studying German without a master."'

"Well, Dorcas, as soon as she had finished I told her what my object was in asking, and gave her the substance of all that was said at the missionary meeting; and she clasped her hands in joy, and said with tears in her eyes:

"'God does answer prayer; He has opened the way for which I have been longing. Praises be to His holy name!'

"Yes, Dorcas, before Philemon and I left David's the matter was settled, and Gerty

had taken her first lesson in Chinese; and I couldn't help saying to myself, 'Matilda Atheling, you have done some good in the world; at least, so far, it is no worse for your living in it.'

"Just see the people coming in! and the lecturer has taken his place. I am real glad we had the chance to have this nice talk, Dorcas."

CHAPTER XVI.

THE MINNESOTA MISSIONARY CONVENTION.

"GOOD-MORNING, Dorcas. Come out to the carriage a minute, will you? I wish you would go to town with me this morning, for besides having the pleasure of your company I would have the chance to tell you of our lovely visit to Sister Tabitha and the missionary convention. Go get on your wraps; I will wait for you as long as you need."

"Well, it did not take you long to get ready. Step right in and make yourself comfortable, and we will have the six miles there and six miles back to talk.

"To begin at the beginning. Sister Tabitha sent us one of her cordial invitations to come in time for the missionary convention, and Philemon wrote that we would come; and we

made all our plans to have a good refreshing visit, as we certainly did have.

"A few days before the time we had arranged to go a new thought came into my mind, and I resolved to tell Philemon of it that very evening. So as soon as supper was over, and we were sitting by the lamp, and he was paring an apple, said I, 'Philemon.'

"Said he, 'Well?'

"'Let us start two days earlier than we planned, and go round by Washington and stop off there the two days.'

"Philemon was agreeable, and we carried out the plan. And the first day we paid a visit to Mount Vernon, with a great many sight-seers besides ourselves—among them the Chinese legation—and all our pictures were taken while we were standing on the green before the mansion. Philemon bought one, and we prize it not only for the reason that the Celestials with their gay, rich robes are in it, but as a memento of a truly happy day.

"It wasn't our first visit to Washington, and we had done all the public buildings, and the Monument thrown in, before, and it wasn't worth while to tire ourselves out doing them again. But the next morning we did walk through the White House grounds, for I said to Philemon that we might catch a glimpse of the beautiful young wife of the President, and I really had a desire to see her.

"You know that I was always the luckiest creature in the world in regard to the simple pleasures which go toward making the happiness of life; and it wasn't intended that I should be disappointed this time. We had rested under the trees, and then walked to the front of the executive mansion, and there stood a carriage, waiting for some one to take a drive. I mistrusted that the *one* was 'the first lady in the land,' and I was right; for down the portico steps she came with another lady; and you will not be surprised when I tell you that the fair young creature looked down upon us with a sweet

smile, and Philemon raised his hat and I smiled back. She knew that we plain elderly people wanted to see her, and she wasn't going to let us be disappointed; and I said to Philemon that it was just one of my pleasant happenings—far better than jostling in the crowd of a public reception, when people are driven through the rooms like a flock of sheep.

"Well, we had a charming morning; and after dinner at the hotel we went out for another walk. We hadn't gone far when we saw a lot of women hurrying to a great building and rushing up the broad steps.

"'What is going on here?' said I to a girl who was making for the door.

"She turned pleasantly to me, looking surprised that I didn't know, hurried over a few words, and rushed in.

"'What did she say, Matilda?' asked Philemon.

"'She ran her words together so quickly that I couldn't quite separate them,' said I;

'but she said something about "sufferers." Maybe there has been a fire or flood or something, and they are collecting money for the poor creatures.'

"You know that Philemon Atheling's heart and hand are always open to appeals of that kind, and I saw that he wanted to go in, but I didn't say anything.

"'Matilda,' said he.

"'Well?' said I.

"'Let us go in; maybe we can help the poor creatures in some way.'

"I was agreeable, and we hurried in like the others; and although the big house was full, we got seats together where we could see and hear everything that was going on. It was the handsomest building I ever was in, with gilding and frescoing, and curtains and chandeliers and carpet and nice velvety seats.

"I was a little bewildered at first with the crowd and hurry and fuss of finding seats, and when I got calmed the first thing I noticed was a large and perfect portrait of

Lucretia Mott, looking right at Philemon and me.

"'Philemon,' I whispered.

"'Well?' whispered he.

"'It must be a Friends' meeting—there is Lucretia Mott.'

"'Yes,' whispered he, 'I reckon it is; but it is as good a place as any to rest, so we will stay.'

"I was real glad he felt so, for that picture had bridged over the gulf of years, and I was no longer an elderly woman, but a child again in my old home; and it was the Friends' Quarterly Meeting day, and we were all in the old meeting-house and waiting in the subdued hush for the preaching to begin. I seemed to hear the chirping of insects outside on the grassy graves in the burying-ground where slept the ancient fathers of the church, and the twittering of birds in the Lombardy poplars and willow-trees near by. Quarterly Meeting day was a great event, the crowning day of the summer; and coming, as it did, on

the first sixth day after the third second day of the eighth month, there was no school, and children who wanted to go could go, and I was one of them. And while taking in all the proceedings, I did not forget the dinner-table at home, which would be groaning with good things for the Quarterly Meeting dinner; for our home was within a stone's throw of the meeting-house, and we had many relatives from a distance who would take dinner with us, and some of the preachers would be there, and everybody who came would be welcome.

"On those great days there were always several noted preachers, who were all listened to with attention; but a thrill passed over the great assembly when Lucretia Mott rose, and they sat spellbound until she finished. She was the sweetest little creature, so fair and frail-looking and dainty; and her voice thrilled one like a strain of plaintive music.

"I had been used to hearing women-preachers all my life, and I think it the most

natural and proper thing in the world, one of the most cherished pictures of memory being that of that sainted Christian, Lucretia Mott.

"Well, talking of her has brought back old times, and you will think I shall never get to the meeting. Let me see: where was I? Oh yes; I had whispered to Philemon that it must be a Friends' meeting, but thought at the same time it was too gay-looking for a Quaker meeting-house; so I turned to a young girl next to me and said:

"'Will you be kind enough to tell me the name of this pretty building?'

"'Yes,' said she, smiling pleasantly; 'it is Albaugh's Theater.'

"'Well, Matilda Atheling,' thought I, 'most of folks go to the theater when they are young, if they go at all; but you have commenced at the other end of the line, and are setting a pretty example to other church people.' I didn't say anything of this to Philemon, for I thought to myself that a few minutes more there wouldn't hurt us any

more than we were already hurt; and if it is good enough for even the picture of Lucretia Mott, it is good enough for me.

"'Are the people who are on the stage actors?' inquired I of the kind young girl.

"'Oh no,' said she, smiling; 'those are the speakers and their friends.'

"Just then Philemon said, 'Matilda.'

"Said I, 'Well?'

"'This is a political meeting as sure as I live; there is Frederick Douglass on the platform—I know him by his pictures. He must be going to speak; I am real glad we came; I always wanted to hear him.'

"I never saw a finer-looking set of women than was on that platform, and I was wishing I knew who they were, when the dear young girl who sat next to me spoke:

"'I have been here to the meetings and know most of the speakers; would you like to be told who they are?'

"'Indeed I would,' said I, 'and it is real sweet and kind in you to tell me.'

"'Well,' said she, 'that one with a mass of beautiful white hair is Elizabeth Cady Stanton; the one with the dainty lace cap is Julia Ward Howe; the one toying with a fan is Matilda Jocelyn Gage; the one next to her, with white ribbon on her breast, is Frances E. Willard; that stylish, Frenchy-looking one in a handsome lace shawl is Sarah G. Lippincott, known in literature as "Grace Greenwood"; the one with a paper in her hand is Jenny June Croly; the one so handsomely attired next to her is Margaret Bottome, the founder of the society of the "King's Daughters"; the lady next to her is the Rev. Anna Shaw, who is not only a minister but a graduate of a medical college; the one about to call the meeting to order is Susan B. Anthony, and—' And then she had to stop.

"Well, when I heard the names—particularly the last one—I mistrusted where we were, but I didn't say anything to Philemon, who was looking about him, and, I knew, was wondering what building it was.

"The first speaker let in more light to my understanding, but not to Philemon's; for he hadn't an idea who any of them were except Frederick, and he felt as comfortable being at a political meeting with him as I had being at a Quaker meeting with Lucretia Mott.

"The first speaker told us that the first meeting of the kind was planned by Lucretia Mott when at a convention in London where they wouldn't let women speak; and then she mentioned all the bother they had getting started, and I noticed that Philemon was listening with all his ears. It wasn't a long speech, and was in as sweet and gentle, yet clear, a voice as I ever heard. And then Elizabeth Cady Stanton spoke, and the whole crowded house was listening as intently as could be, when Philemon whispered, 'Matilda.'

"'Well?' whispered I.

"'This is a woman's-rights meeting as sure as you live; let us go.'

"'But, Philemon, this is a grand place to

rest, and we might as well stay here as to walk about the city or mope at the hotel from now till to-morrow morning.'

"'Do you think I am going to sit here and listen to short-haired, shrill-voiced, mannish-looking women swaggering about, conceiting they are speaking?'

"'Point out any who look that way, Philemon,' said I; 'that is only the kind you read of —none of them are here; besides, you haven't heard Frederick Douglass make a political speech.'

"'No,' said he, 'I haven't.' And he settled back in the comfortable seat.

"Well, first one of the women spoke and then another; and the last one of the Hutchinson family sang one of their old songs that I had heard the whole thirteen sing when I was younger; and I could see that Philemon was getting interested in spite of himself.

"There was more speaking—all being limited to five-minute speeches—and then Susan B. Anthony said:

"'Let every woman in the house that is willing to vote signify it by putting up the right hand.' And, so far as I could see, every woman put up a hand except I.

"I would have been among the first, I reckon, if Philemon hadn't whispered, in real tragic tones:

"'Matilda, whatever you do, don't join in with that short-haired, shrill-voiced, mannish crowd.'

"So, out of respect to his convictions, I don't say that I am sorry I didn't.

"Well, numbers were so against Philemon that he would have left there and then; but Frederick Douglass hadn't been up, and although he didn't take the interest he would have done had it been a political meeting, Frederick was Frederick, and he didn't want to lose the chance to hear him. I was enjoying all to the fullest extent, when Philemon whispered, 'Matilda.'

"'Well?' said I.

"'I really wish I knew what to call this

meeting; I have read Douglass's speeches, and can't think his good sense would let him be a woman's-rights man.'

"'It is the Woman's International Council,' said the young girl next to me, who had heard him. And Philemon had the grace to thank her, although not well pleased with the name of the meeting.

"After a time it came Frederick's turn to speak; and I declare I couldn't keep from laughing in my sleeve to see the fix Philemon was in. He was delighted with Frederick's eloquence, but didn't like the subject; he couldn't help showing his eager interest, but didn't want me to think he liked the woman's-rights opinions Frederick was uttering. So between these two fires Philemon was really uncomfortable, and when the speech was over he turned to me and said:

"'Matilda, isn't it queer a man that can speak that way would waste his words on such a question as woman's rights?'

"Well, as I said before, not knowing my

own mind on this subject, I thought silence was best; and at that minute a young lady got up and sang one of the sweetest old-time songs—one that Philemon and I used to sing when we were young; and the tears really came to our eyes as we listened.

"Then the meeting was over, and we left with the crowd. And in the evening, when we were sitting by one of the windows of the hotel that looks out on 'the avenue,' as they call it, Philemon said, 'Matilda.'

"Said I, 'Well?'

"'Before I knew anything about the heathen,' said he, 'I didn't take any interest in missions; and before I knew anything about woman's-rights women I thought they wore short hair and went swaggering about thinking they could speak. I guess, Matilda, that folks have to be educated up to the belief that women should vote, just as that heathen should have the gospel sent them. I haven't reached that idea yet, that they have any business at the polls, but if I don't want

to reach it I must stay away from woman's-rights conventions.'

"Well, Dorcas, the next morning, bright and early, Philemon and I continued on our journey to Minnesota; and we had so many pleasant incidents on the way that we can never forget it; and it seemed to me that Philemon had ever so many chances to do kindnesses, and never let one slip.

"When we got within about fifty miles of the town where Sister Tabitha lives, we had to change cars, and Philemon and I were among the first to step on; but I was first, and got a nice seat for us, for he had been kept back by the crowd at the door. But finally he struggled in, and put the satchels under the seat, just as a real handsome young couple took the seat before us; and in their chat we gathered that they had just been married at her father's house and were on their way to the groom's home in the very town in Minnesota where lived Sister Tabitha. They chatted like two loving little wrens—but not

a bit foolish—and Philemon and I fell in love with them.

"After a time the bride began searching for something in great earnest. She looked in her pocket and hand-satchel and shawl-strap, and then the groom searched in all his pockets, and then they arose and looked on the floor and under the seat; and whatever was lost couldn't be found, and the bride commenced crying bitterly, and the groom tried to comfort her.

"'Oh,' said she, in a low tone—but we heard it—'I would not care so much if it could be replaced; but there are names on it that I can never have again; and even if it were possible, it would never seem the same. I was intending to have it framed and keep it all my life, and now it is gone.' And she wept again.

"Well, Philemon and I sat and wondered what it could be; and after some nodding and whispering between us, I leaned over and said:

"'Excuse an old woman for meddling, but what is it you have lost?'

"Well, the dear young creature seemed glad that I asked, and so did the young husband.

"'It is our marriage certificate, beautifully ornamented with hand-painting by a dear friend. It has over three hundred names of relatives and friends who witnessed our marriage; and I intended to keep it always, and now it is gone.'

"Philemon and I were sorry that this shadow must be cast upon the brightness of her wedding-day, and, indeed, all her after-life, but we couldn't think of anything to cheer her; and I was looking out of the window when a thought came into my mind.

"'Philemon,' said I.

"'Well?' said he.

"'What was the little package you picked up just as we stepped on the platform of the car?'

"Philemon looked puzzled for a minute, and then spoke:

"'I did pick up something, but never thought of it afterward, and don't know where I put it.'

"'Try and think, Philemon,' said I; 'maybe you put it in one of your pockets.'

"'Now, Matilda,' said he, 'what could I put it in my pocket with, when my two hands were carrying two satchels, an umbrella, a waterproof, and a basket? Besides, if I remember rightly, it was too long to go into a pocket.'

"'Maybe it is in your hat,' said I.

"'Who was so kind as to lift off my hat to put it in, Matilda?' remarked Philemon.

"But yet I could see that he was considering; and after a while he stooped for one of the little satchels, and lo and behold! in the strap was sticking a roll of paper. We opened it and found it to be the lost marriage certificate, and Philemon put it in her hand.

"Well, you never saw people more pleased than that young couple were. They both

rose and shook hands with Philemon and me, and that sweet, fair bride put her arms around my neck and kissed me. We found out by further conversation that the groom was a son of Sister Tabitha's pastor, and he spoke in warm praise of her usefulness and liberality in the church and community.

"Well, we really had a charming visit in Minnesota; every hour was enjoyed, and time went too fast.

"The convention was a grand success, and there had been so much good done, and the wise plans made at the former convention had been carried out, and the reports from foreign parts were so satisfactory.

"Sister Tabitha entertained the president of the general society and a lot of delegates from different parts of the Union, among them, to my surprise and joy, Alice Preston, looking prettier than I ever imagined she could look; for she had such a kind husband, and was happy and contented in her work as missionary to the Indians.

"In the discussions at the sessions of the convention many things were brought up which Philemon and I had talked of by our fireside; and we found that among numbers, as with us, there were the encouraging and discouraging sides of the question of missions.

"Those who looked at it in a discouraging way spoke of the two hundred and fifty thousand heathen who were the average to every missionary, and said how impossible it would be for the world to be evangelized under the difficulties existing, especially that of the missionary being a foreigner and having to teach in a foreign tongue, and having to face the prejudices and habits which belonged to the race he was trying to convert.

"But the majority was on the encouraging side, and said that 'while there were great hindrances, and but a mite of the force that was really needed to combat them, yet one little fact should banish all discouragement, which was that God is with the little army of

missionaries. They go by His command; they fight His battles; they are sustained by His promise of victory. And this is not all; there is a conscience in every man, which may be appealed to, and in many cases will not refuse its aid. Truth is on their side; and all useful knowledge, the science of the day, steam, electricity—all these in many ways lend a hand to diffuse Christianity. The general progress of enlightenment, the spirit of the nineteenth century, is a powerful aid in all that is right and true. Christianity is a living and life-giving faith. It propagates itself. Every lighted brand lights other brands with which it comes in contact; so each new convert is to some extent a center of light. With some it may be only a tiny glimmer; still it is something. Already there are in India more than half a million bearing the Christian name. This rapidly growing body must make its influence felt. The work may be delayed, but it will be accomplished. To hasten it all that is needed is less apathy

among those who claim to be followers of Christ, and the using of even one tenth for the evangelizing of the nations which is now spent for luxuries.'

"Then Alice Preston was called upon to say something, and she remarked that no words of hers could express so well what was in her thoughts as the written words of a great preacher whom she named:

"'We are in the ship; Jesus is on the shore. He sees all the work and oversees it. Dark though it be by night, little though at times we seem to succeed, He guides the casting of the net; He will secure a result of glory and success. His number shall be complete; He will lose nothing. In the morning all shall be landed safely.'

"Yes, Dorcas, Philemon and I learned a great deal at that convention, and we thanked Sister Tabitha for inviting us at that time and giving us such a grand visit.

"On our way home we stopped off at David's to tell them all about our trip, and to

attend the wedding of Gerty, who, with her husband, sailed the following week for China.

"And that wedding was as unexpected to Gerty and the groom and David's folks, and, in fact, to everybody, as it was to Philemon and me; and I will tell you how it came about.

"Gerty had learned the Chinese language, and was to go to China with a missionary's family; and in three years she intended to return and be married to Simeon Petticord's eldest son, who had been a student in the medical college, and had studied Chinese in the same class with Gerty at Mrs. Hudson's. Naturally he longed to go to China with her as her husband, but he hadn't the means; and what did he do but go to Sarah Petticord and tell her his wishes; and she told him that if he felt it a call to be a medical missionary, the money should be furnished him forthwith.

"Well, that was such unexpected news to Gerty that she was at a loss to know whether she ought to agree to it or not; for she didn't

know what the society that was sending her would think of it. So she went to see Mrs. Dale, and Mrs. Dale saw the president, who called a meeting to see if the members were willing.

"It was real amusing to see the way they took the news. Some said, 'No indeed; it wasn't what they intended when they contributed money to send a missionary to China. They had chosen a young girl because she would have no home cares to keep her from attending to her business of teaching and converting the heathen.' They said if she married her time and attention would be given to her husband and her home, and the heathen would be no better off than they were before she went.

"Others said that a contented, happy, married woman could do more good among the poor creatures than a lonely, homesick girl who had left a promised husband here, who would keep writing to her, making her unsettled and discontented.

"When all who were willing to speak had spoken, the president turned to Mrs. Dale and said:

"'What does the sister say who contributed more than half the sum to send our missionary to China?'

"'Why, she says,' said Mrs. Dale, 'that a happy Christian home such as Dr. Petticord and Gerty would establish would exert more influence for good than Gerty alone could possibly be capable of exerting. Moreover,' said Mrs. Dale, 'you will have two teachers for the price you are paying for one; for Dr. Petticord will be self-supporting, let you place him where you will; and you will find that three years will not limit the stay, if both go.'

"So it was decided and settled that Gerty was to marry Dr. Petticord, and the whole missionary society was invited to the wedding. And I never saw a prettier bride nor a handsomer groom.

"Simeon Petticord was there; also Sarah, looking as calm and serene as though it

wasn't anything out of the common order of things for her to send a son as missionary to China now and again; and she kissed her new daughter-in-law and chatted with her the same as if she had known her from a baby, when, in truth, she had never seen her until then, and might never see her again.

"Gerty's father was there with his new wife—a handsome, prosperous-looking man, as she was a fine-looking, sensible woman—and Gerty was glad that he would not miss her so much, now that he was happy in his home with a good wife.

"Then, after the nice refreshments which David and his wife had provided were served, we went down to the wharf to see them off in the vessel, which was making ready to sail; and the same evening Philemon and I came home, after one of the loveliest visits we ever had."

CHAPTER XVII.

BROUGHT INTO THE FOLD.

"GOOD-EVENING, Dorcas. I am really glad you came; I am going to Mr. Granger's woods to get some moss for hanging-baskets, and would like you to go with me. We will sit on the log by the spring and talk; for I must tell you of Zed Granger's awakening—while in this world—to a new and better life. Yes, he has fought a battle and won a victory; where he was once blind, he can now see.

"Take this place, Dorcas; isn't it a lovely spot?—so secluded and restful, and always will be endeared to me from association with Mrs. Granger.

"I have brought the letter which was written by the Nebraska missionary after they

had used the money sent by check, and tried on the garments which were sent in the box. Other causes delayed their reply, but it came in time to be read at our last meeting, and I asked Sarah Petticord to give it to me to read to you:

"'DEAR CHRISTIAN FRIENDS: No words can express our gratitude to God, and to you who have so aided us by your nobly generous contribution of a box of clothing and seventy-five dollars in money. You will pardon me that I have appeared neglectful in acknowledging your kindness earlier—save by the few lines sent the day of the reception of your letter, and one the next day after receiving the box—when I tell you the cause was the watching by the dying-bed of our little crippled daughter, who has gone home, and is above and beyond all the sorrows of this life. We miss her every moment, but her patient life and happy death are a benediction to us. In her last hour she bequeathed her precious doll to

the young Indian girl, who is one of our family, and daily growing in the knowledge of Christian living. That our little one died with the doll in her arms seems to have made a great impression upon her. We will never know in this life the limit which the gift of Mrs. Granger will reach in the work of missions; for our Indian visits the lodge of the chief of her people, taking the doll with her, and while there imparts all the knowledge she gathers from us; and we try to make it effective. It would be impossible to tell how many Indians have come from a distance to see the doll and hear its history; they look upon it as something to be revered.

"'The clothing sent was all that could be desired in material and fit; through your Christian helpfulness we are now prepared for winter. May God bless all and each of you with every blessing you most need; all I can bestow is my heartfelt gratitude. Please give my sincere thanks to Mr. Starkey and others who gave money to purchase the suit

of clothing for me. I stood much in need of it, that I might do credit to my calling in appearance as well as character; for one cannot deny that neat and genteel apparel has its influence upon those we wish to improve.

"'Please give my heartfelt thanks to Mr. Granger for his generous gift of seventy-five dollars. It gave our beloved child a burial that was comforting to our bruised hearts, and which could not have been done save for his timely gift. Tell him that night and morning he is mentioned specially in our prayers; and we pray that, if he be a father, his children may be spared to him; for none save those who have lost little ones know how the heart of a parent is wrung to see them suffer and die. I feel sure that the grace of God is in his heart, and that he is a kind, cherishing husband and loving father, a useful citizen, and a blessing to all with whom he is associated in life.

"'Thanking you all again and again, I remain your brother in Christ.'

"Well, Dorcas, the evening after this letter was read at our missionary meeting, Sarah Petticord sent it to Zed Granger's; for the society decided that it was no more than just and right that they should know how their gifts were appreciated. But more than all, Sister Slocum and the Petticords and Philemon and I had a secret hope and prayer that it might be of benefit to Zed; for he reminds me of a plant that has grown in a dark cellar and is struggling to reach forward to a ray of light which has lately crept in.

"Sister Slocum's letter from Serena was also read in the society and sent with the missionary's letter to Zed, and, after he returned it, was given back to Sister Slocum. It was a deeply interesting letter; and one thing I particularly remember in it was the way they got the box from the station, which I will tell you.

"When the scarlet fever broke out among them the snow was so deep, and it was so bitter cold, that not a creature could venture

out; and they were miles from the nearest town and a doctor, and nearly out of food and fuel. But the missionary prayed for aid, and had faith that it would come, and it did come; but it couldn't save the little crippled daughter; and they knew that it was God's will that they must part from her, and they were submissive under the trial.

"The first aid that came was from a poor, half-frozen Indian who had been Christianized by the missionary. He came, as soon as the blinding storm would let him, to see if the family needed anything; and when he found that they were down with the scarlet fever, he went back to his home and brought his squaw to wait upon them. They came with what poor food they had, and their arms filled with wood they had gathered on the way; and they made a good fire and did all they could for the help of those who had been good to them.

"As soon as the storm would let him, the Indian walked the long distance to the near-

est town to fetch the doctor, who was to call at the post-office; which he did, and got the letter from our society which contained the check.

"It wasn't fit for wagon or anything on wheels to travel, so the doctor came on horseback, the Indian walking before, to guide the horse through safe paths.

"The missionary indorsed the check, and when the doctor paid his next visit he brought the money, except what had been used for greatly needed things which the missionary had asked him to buy, and which he brought in sacks. A day or so after the box came, on a great sled drawn by oxen, the people in the town helping to level the drifts, so it could travel. Then what joy there was in the missionary's family when the warm blankets and comfortable clothes were brought to view!

"Well, as I said before, these letters were sent to Philip Starkey and to Zedekiah Granger; and the next evening, while Philemon and I were seated by our fire, we heard a tap at the door, and Zed came in.

"Philemon brought a chair to the hearth for him, and he sat down, looking pale and sad. He took the missionary's letter from his pocket and laid it upon the table.

"'Friends,' said he, turning his tear-dimmed eyes to us, 'I have awakened to the longing for a new and better life. I earnestly wish to be a Christian, and have come to you, my oldest friends and neighbors, to show me the way.'

"Yes, Dorcas, our brother was sick and in prison, and had come to us for words that would heal him and set him free.

"'If a person believes like a Christian he will live like one,' said Philemon, tenderly; 'only believe, brother.'

"'I do believe—oh, freely and fully!' cried Zed, clasping his hands. 'But the days that are past, never to return—how can I atone for them?'

"'By casting all care for them on Jesus, who careth for you,' said Philemon; 'it is not the past we are called upon each day to live,

but the present.' And then he gave Zed Granger our experience of living day by day; and Zed seemed cheered to know there was a plan that seemed so easy to follow.

"'I have lived a selfish life in the community and in my family,' said he, 'and my awakening has come so suddenly, and with such force, that I am stunned and bewildered by what I have left undone and what I now know is my duty to do. The visit of your sister Tabitha was the first insight I had that we were not living as others lived, but I was helpless to see where to make a change. When I paid the first visits of my life—to you and the Petticords and Mary Slocum—I noticed where the husbands had made all improvements for the comfort and convenience of their wives, while I had never given the health and happiness of my wife one thought. I admired your way of living; I knew you were Christians, and noticed that you were cheerful, companionable, and happy; I was not a Christian, and was morose, solitary, and

miserable. You were all helpful to others; I never did a generous deed in my life, unless forced into it, as in case of the money sent to this man, who writes of me under the impression that I am one like you, while you were all too good and generous—too Christian-like—to tell him what a poor creature I am.

"'Simeon Petticord's children cling about him and look up to him as their loved friend and companion, while mine are in terror of me, and would not be a moment in my society if they could help it. I am afraid the injury done their sensitive, timid natures is irreparable, and they can never care for me.' And tears stood in his eyes as he said it.

"'No,' said I, eagerly, 'children — bless them—are too generous and noble to foster resentment; I am sure that a few kind words will obliterate any injustice in the hearts of little ones like yours.'

"'Pray God it may be so! but I fear they will always remember my coldness and severity. And my wife—when, at Mrs. Slocum's

that evening, I compared her faded face and sad eyes with those of wives of men who knew how to treat the ones they had vowed to love and cherish, the thought of the years of oppression and privation she had passed at my side almost overwhelmed me, and I then and there asked God to pardon me and help me to be a better husband and father. When we returned to our home that evening I went to the room where slept our children, and, kneeling by the bedside, I gazed into the faces which never had the look of happy childhood, and in their sleep-bound ears I breathed a prayer for pardon for my harshness and cruelty to them. I vowed by the help of God never again to wound their tender flesh by a blow, or their tender, sensitive hearts by a bitter word. The whole night I remained upon my knees; and toward the dawning my wife came and knelt beside me, and I knew that I was forgiven.

"'When morning came, my children seemed to realize that there was a change; they made

no comment, but gazed compassionately upon me; and one of them—my youngest—came and slipped her little hand in mine, as though hoping to give comfort for what she could not understand.'

"'Behold, old things have passed away, and all things are new,' said Philemon, reverently. 'You have only now to live day by day and perform the duty nearest at hand.'

"'I will try,' said Zed, humbly; 'and for a beginning I sent Simeon Petticord the eighty dollars, with interest, of which I had deprived him; and have engaged a surveyor to decide the exact spot for the corner-stone between Philip Starkey's land and mine, and if he is right it shall be moved.'

"'You have brought forth fruit meet for repentance,' said Philemon, cheerfully; 'all that remains is to live day by day.'

"'Day by day,' repeated Zed, 'to do the duty nearest; I wish I knew where to begin.'

"'Are you willing for me to advise?' inquired I.

"'Willingly; gladly.'

"'Then take Mrs. Granger and the children on a visit to her parents in Kansas; it is the longing of her life.'

"'I will,' said he, earnestly; 'I know she has never seen one of her family since she left them. Strange that it never occurred to me that it was possible for us to be spared from the farm, or that a loving, dutiful daughter would not long to visit her old home. Henceforth I shall strive to make up for all that I have deprived them of, and my means shall be used for their comfort and that of others, wherever needed.'

"And, Dorcas, we know Zed Granger well enough to believe he meant it and would do as he promised.

"'Thank you, Mrs. Atheling, for this suggestion,' said he; 'and thank you both for the comfort you have given me.'

"Then he bade us good-night and went home.

"They began the very next morning to

make ready for their journey. Zed took Mrs. Granger to the city to buy all they needed ready-made, that she might not be harassed by the work and hurry of preparation; and besides, they wished to go in the lovely weather of early autumn, that the children might play in the forest where the mother and the little brothers and sisters had played, and to visit the spot where she stood when the cyclone made itself heard.

"Zed was just as happy in the prospect as any of them; for he was also to take them to visit his uncle's family, and to the school-house where he first met their mother.

"Philemon and I went to Dorton to see them off in the train, and a happier-looking family I never saw. We have firm faith that the repentance of the husband and father is real, and the change permanent. When we reflected upon the good he can and will do we agreed that, in our plan of living day by day, the day on which we had written the first letter to Sister Tabitha was the most blessed

one of all; for besides other good results, it was the beginning of a train of events which led to the awakening of Zedekiah Granger.

"And the notice of the minister, that blessed Sunday, which called us together to form our village missionary society was the little acorn which had grown to an oak with spreading branches; and under its shelter and shade many have found peace to their souls."

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